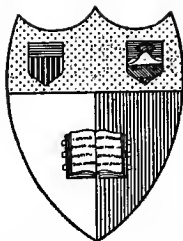


THE
FRENCH COLONIAL QUESTION

1789-1791

GARRETT

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THE FRENCH COLONIAL QUESTION 1789-1791

Dealings of the Constituent Assembly With Problems
Arising From the Revolution in the
West Indies

By

MITCHELL BENNETT GARRETT, PH.D.
ACTING PROFESSOR OF HISTORY IN SAINT LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY

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PREFACE

Under the direction of the late Professor Ralph C. H. Catterall I began to make a study of Barnave's career in the Constituent Assembly to complete the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. At the outset I was confronted with the necessity of making a rather intensive study of the early revolutionary period in order to give the biographical sketch an adequate historical setting. To compile a narrative of Barnave's daily deeds and speeches without sufficient explanation of what other men were doing and saying around him promised to be an idle undertaking. I needed to estimate Barnave's influence on the actions of the Constituent Assembly. With this task in view, therefore, I turned aside, after a few months of general investigation, to familiarize myself thoroughly with the work of the committee on colonies of which Barnave was reporter and most conspicuous member. My intention was to study afterwards other phases of Barnave's political activity in the same intensive fashion and eventually to gather the results of my investigations into a complete biography. But that biography has now been written by another. *The Life of Barnave* (Oxford, 1915, 2 vols.) by Miss E. D. Bradby has well-nigh exhausted the subject. Rather than to go gleaning after her I prefer to put together the best of my materials on the colonies and withdraw from the field.

The French colonies in the West Indies, with which this study deals, have already attracted the attention of historians. The secondary works listed in my bibliography will indicate what has been done for the period of the Constituent Assembly. For the most part, however, historians have been interested primarily in the colonies as such and have not examined with painstaking

care the records of the Constituent Assembly to discover the efforts of the national deputies at Paris to understand and redress the colonial grievances. This deficiency I have tried to supply. The failure of former writers to make this part of the story clear and accurate is my excuse for adding another book to the list.

To the friends who have helped me I hereby acknowledge my obligations. Professor Charles O. Hardy, of Ottawa University, who is making a study of the mulattoes in the West Indies, more than once placed valuable bits of information freely at my disposal. Professor Edward Raymond Turner, of the University of Michigan, read a part of my manuscript and from time to time gave me advice and encouragement. Professor Charles H. Hull, of Cornell University, read the entire manuscript and gave me a valuable suggestion which I tried to adopt. To Mr. Willard H. Austen, Librarian of Cornell University, I am especially grateful for many courtesies. He allowed me the freedom of the stacks and permitted me to collect all pertinent material in an alcove where I could work in peace and comfort. During my researches in the Archives Nationales, I was guided and assisted by Messrs. Waldo G. Leland and Abel Doysié, of the Carnegie Bureau for Historical Research. To all these friends I take pleasure in acknowledging my gratitude.

Canton, New York.

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CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY DEALINGS WITH THE COLONIAL PROBLEM.

By 1789 the colonial empire of France had been reduced to scattered fragments. South of Newfoundland were the two small islands of Saint Pierre and Miquelon, inhabited by a few hundred Europeans engaged in cod-fishing. In the West Indies were Martinique, Guadeloupe, Tobago, Saint Lucia, and the French part of Santo Domingo or modern Haiti. Closely bound to this group by proximity of territory and similarity of institutions was French Guiana on the continent of South America. Across the sea on the western coast of Africa were Senegal, Saint Louis, Goree and Juda—mere factories to facilitate trade in slaves, ivory and caoutchouc. Beyond the Cape of Good Hope were the Ile de France and the Ile de Bourbon, of no great importance commercially, serving as ports of call between France and the Far East. In India were Pondicherry, Karikal and Yanaon upon the Coromandel, and Mahé upon the Malabar coast; while upon the banks of the Ganges was Chandernagore¹. Nearly all these possessions were profoundly affected by the French Revolution, but in this study only those in the West Indies will be considered.

The white population of these islands was divided into three general classes—the planters, the government officials, and the *petits-blancs*. A majority of the planters resided permanently in the colonies and exploited their wide acres of coffee and sugar-cane with slave labor; but a wealthy minority lived in France

¹ Statement of the Minister of Marine to the National Assembly.—*Le Point du Jour* (By Barère, started on June 19, 1879), no. 238, pp. 367-370.

as absentee landlords and not infrequently contracted marriage alliances with impoverished noble families. The fact that one hundred fifty colonial proprietors sat in the Constituent Assembly as national deputies² may be cited as evidence of the number and political influence in the mother country of these colonial nabobs. The government officials were an arrant lot of "arbitrary soldiers, supercilious bureaucrats, and pedantic lawyers"³ sent out from Europe to bear sway over the King's dominions beyond the sea. Contemptuous and disdainful of all things provincial, they formed a caste apart. The *petits-blancs*, or "mean whites", were small traders, adventurers and nondescripts in the cities, and slave overseers and mechanics in the country — all men of shady character and noted for their brutality, their lawlessness and their hatred of the colored race.⁴

Likewise the colored population was divided into three classes—the mulattoes, the free blacks and the slaves. The mulattoes numbered about forty thousand against about eighty-three thousand whites,⁵ and in some cases they had considerable wealth⁶

² *Journal des Etats-généraux* (By Lehoudey de Saultchevreuil, started on June 1, 1789), XXXII., 159.

³ Stoddard, T. Lothrop. *The French Revolution in San Domingo* (Boston and New York, 1914), 68.

⁴ Raymond, *Observations sur l'Origine et les Progrès du Préjugé des Colons blancs contre les Hommes de Couleur*; * * * (Paris, 1791), 11. Raimond, J., *Mémoire sur les Causes des Troubles et des Désastres de la Colonie de Saint-Domingue*, * * * (Paris, 1793), 8. Brissot, J. P., *Discours sur la Nécessité de maintenir le Décret rendu le 15 Mai 1791* (s. l. n. d.). Cf. Stoddard, *op. cit.*, 24-26.

⁵ Grégoire, *Lettre aux Philantropes*, * * (Reprinted in *Courier de Provence*, XI, 115-135), 117. Cf. Deschamps, Léon, *Les Colonies pendant la Révolution* (Paris, 1898), 296.

⁶ It was asserted that the mulattoes owned one-third the soil and one-fourth the slaves in Santo Domingo. *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XXV., 496. Raimond, Julien *Véritable Origine des Troubles de S.-Domingue, et des Différentes Causes qui les Produits* (Paris, 1792), 3-4. Raymond was a mulatto, educated and wealthy, resident in France since 1784.

and education; but they were treated by the whites as social inferiors. They were not allowed to wear fine clothes, to ride in carriages, to sit beside the whites in church or at meals, and, though they served in the ranks of the militia and bore other burdens of citizenship, they were forbidden to hold any office, trust or employment.⁷ "A mulatto could not be a priest, nor a lawyer, nor a physician, nor a surgeon, nor an apothecary, nor a school-master."⁸ Between the mulattoes and themselves the whites had fixed a great gulf, and they were determined that there should be no crossing.⁹ Naturally the mulattoes were discontented with their status and, as early as 1784, they were appealing to the Minister of Marine to redress their grievances.¹⁰

The free blacks were poor, ignorant outcasts, despised alike by whites and mulattoes. Their number was small, and they never played an independent rôle.¹¹ The African slaves were,

⁷ Grégoire, *Mémoire en Faveur des Gens de Couleur ou Sang-mêlés de St.-Domingue, & des autres Isles françaises de l'Amérique, adressé à l'Assemblée nationale* (Paris, 1789). 5-9. Statement of Goupil-Prefelne in *Gazette nationale, ou le Moniteur universel* (Original edition, started on November 24, 1789, in folio. Commonly called simply the *Moniteur*), 14 mai 1791, p. 553.

⁸ Edwards, Bryan. *An Historical Survey of the French Colony in the Island of St. Domingo*: * * * (In *The History, Civil and Commercial, of the British West Indies*, III. Fifth edition, London, 1819), II.

⁹ Specific laws and ordinances which restricted the privileges of the mulattoes are quoted in *Supplique et Pétition des Citoyens de Couleur des Isles & Colonies françaises, sur la Motion faite le 27 Novembre 1789, par M. de Curt, * * * Du 2 Décembre 1789 (s. l. n. d.) Cahier, contenant les Plaintes, Doléances & Réclamations des Citoyens-libres & propriétaires de Couleur, des Isles & Colonies françaises. * * * Septembre 1789 (s. l. n. d.)* Stoddard (*op. cit.*) devotes an entire chapter to the mulattoes in Santo Domingo.

¹⁰ Raimond, *Véritable Origine*, 4; *Lettre au Citoyen D* * * *, (Paris, 1793), 7; *Réponse aux Considérations de M. Moreau*, * * * (Paris, 1791), 13. *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XXV. 493-494.

¹¹ Raymond says (*Observations*, 13) that there were only about fifteen hundred free blacks in Santo Domingo, and the number in the other colonies must have been even smaller. As regards their independent rôle, one may read in the *Moniteur* of November 29, 1789 (p. 22), a curious letter

of course, mere chattels; but outnumbering, as they did, the free population of the islands some five or six times,¹² their presence caused at times great trepidation in the breasts of their masters, who stood in constant fear of servile insurrection.

The military defense of the colonies devolved upon the mother country, but as a compensation for carrying this burden the mother country was disposed to monopolize the colonial commerce. This imperial control, or exterior régime as it was technically called, was a great source of annoyance to the planters, and because of their protests the royal government had seen fit to relax from time to time the stringency of the navigation laws. Thus by 1789 there were several ports of entry in the French West Indies to which foreign vessels might resort and, under government supervision, sell to the colonists certain specified commodities which the French markets could not readily furnish, and receive in exchange certain other commodities for which the French markets had little demand. But on the necessities of life, such as flour and clothes, the monopoly remained complete. Consequently, in times of dearth, the colonists suffered serious inconvenience from the inability of the French merchants to furnish, with expedition, a sufficient quantity of food-stuff.¹³

signed by *Les Nègres Libres, Colons Américains*, in which the argument is advanced that the pure negro is superior to the mulatto just as pure gold is superior to alloy. But this letter looks like the handiwork of a white colonist who sought to ridicule the efforts being made at the time by the mulattoes to secure political and social equality. The free blacks are made to say that they repose with confidence upon the wisdom and good offices of their patrons and protectors, the white colonists, and to express the hope that the projects of the mulattoes might fail. Further than this letter, which looks like a fabrication, I have found no evidence that the free blacks ever sought to act as a separate class.

¹² Deschamps, *op. cit.*, 296.

¹³ La Luzerne, *Mémoire Envoyé le 18 Juin 1790, au Comité des Rapports de l'Assemblée nationale* (Paris, 1790), 81. Report of Baron d'Elbhecq, reprinted in *Archives parlementaires*, XI 761. *Précis de la Séance de*

The local government, or interior régime, of each colony was administered by a civil and military bureaucracy at the head of which stood the Governor and the Intendant. Both these high officials were appointed by the King and in theory were responsible to him for their stewardship; but once in the colony their authority was limited in practice only by the check which one might exercise over the other. Both had a great amount of patronage at their disposal, and both were accused by the planters of tyranny, of peculation, and of winking at the iniquities of their protégés.¹⁴

As a result of these conditions in the French West Indies, there was much discontent on the part of the inhabitants. The mulattoes deprecated the invidious social distinctions and demanded the abolition of "the aristocracy of color." The planters "groaned under the yoke of ministerial despotism" and demanded a controlling hand in the local administration of the colony and a voice in the administration of the exterior régime. The slaves were too ignorant perhaps to be conscious of grievances, but their cause had champions across the sea. In February, 1788, there was formed at Paris the *Société des Amis des Noirs*, the avowed purpose of which was to secure the abolition of the

l'Assemblée nationale, Vendredi 28 Août, Sept Heures du Soir (Published by Baudouin, Versailles, 1789). *Journal des Débats et des Décrets* (Published by Baudouin, started on August 29, 1789), no. 2, pp. 1-2; no. 4, pp. 3-4; no. 10, pp. 1-4.

¹⁴ Edwards, *op. cit.*, 4. Gouy d'Arisy, *Première Dénonciation solennelle d'un Ministre faite à l'Assemblée nationale*, * * * (Paris, 1790), 14, 49, 66-74, 77-78, 82-83, 110-111, 124-125, 129. *Confession générale faite au Public par l'Auteur du Mot à l'Oreille* (Perhaps by Gouy d'Arisy, s.l.n.d.), 5, 7. Page, *Discours historique sur la Cause & les Désastres de la Partie française de Saint-Domingue*, * * * (Paris, s.d.), 2-3. Garran, J. Ph., *Rapport sur les Troubles de Saint-Domingue*, * * * (Paris, An VI), I, 31-32. De Pons, *Observations sur la Situation politique de Saint-Domingue* (Paris, 1790), 2-6. Cf. Stoddard, *op. cit.*, 10-14.

slave trade and the gradual emancipation of the slaves.¹⁵ The membership of this society does not seem to have been large, but many philanthropists who were not actually members heartily sympathized with its purpose, and the propaganda which it carried on served to deepen the discontent of the planters. How to secure home rule, therefore, and thus guarantee the existence of slavery, and how to bring about a further modification of the navigation laws was the problem which confronted the planter aristocracy.

If succeeding events had been other than they were, the solution of this problem might have been deferred indefinitely; but in November, 1787, the King decided to revive the moribund Estates General, and some of the more captious planters undertook to seize this opportunity and seek redress for their grievances. They reasoned that if the planters could obtain a representation in the Estates General, they should thereby be raised to the dignity of French citizens and should no longer be victims of commercial oppression. Moreover, they might bring to the foot of the throne a petition for self-government, to which their benevolent sovereign would not turn a deaf ear. So, for this reason, it was determined to drag the colonies into the Revolution.

The movement started at Cap Francais, in the Northern Province of Santo Domingo, where the wealthiest planters lived

¹⁵ Les noirs ne sont pas encore mûrs pour la liberté; il faut les y préparer: telle est la doctrine de cette société. *Le Patriote français* (By Brissot de Warville, started on July 28, 1789), no. 24, p. 4. Cf. *Ibid.*, no. 19, pp. 4-5; no. 199, p. 4; no. 208, p. 5. *Discours sur la Nécessité, d'établir à Paris une Société pour concourir, avec celle de Londres, à l'Abolition de la Traite & de l'Esclavage des Nègres*. Prononcé le 19 Février 1788, dans une Société de quelques Amis rassemblés à Paris, à la Prière du Comité de Londres (s. l. n. d.). Raymond, *Réponse aux Considérations*, 3. The purpose of the society is clearly expressed in an address to the National Assembly reprinted in *Archives parlementaires*, XI 273-274.

and where, to the great annoyance of the planters, the *Conseil Supérieur*, a sort of colonial *parlement*, had just been suppressed by the arbitrary authority of the royal Administrators.¹⁶ Here, in April, 1788, a petition to the King was secretly circulated and signed by four thousand colonists. On May 31, copies of it were forwarded to Marquis de Paroy and Comte de Reynaud, two well known proprietors resident in France.¹⁷ This communication stimulated Reynaud to call together, July 15, eighty colonial proprietors in Paris and ask for advice. The assembly expressed itself in favor of a colonial representation in the Estates General and appointed nine proprietors, whose titles, wealth and social standing might have weight with public opinion, to take charge of the campaign.¹⁸ These nine commissioners,¹⁹ as they were called, met for the first time on August 5 and elected Gouy d'Arsy, one of their number, a blustering, ambitious nobleman, to act as Secretary-Reporter.²⁰ "Within a few weeks," to quote here the words of Stoddard, "a number of pamphlets appeared, mostly from the clever pen of Gouy d'Arcy; wires were indus-

¹⁶ *Opinion de M. le Marquis de Gouy d'Arsy. * * * sur le Rétablissement du Conseil-supérieur du Cap, * * ** (s.l., 1790). Clausson, *Précis historique de la Révolution de Saint-Domingue* (Paris, 1819), 25.

¹⁷ *Précis sur la Position actuelle de la Députation de Saint-Domingue, aux Etats-généraux* (Versailles, 1789), 7. *Extrait des Pièces justificatives à l'Appui de la Dénonciation faite à l'Assemblée nationale du Comte de la Luzerne, * * ** (s. l. n. d.), 7, 17. Gouy d'Arsy, *Première Dénonciation*, 35-36; *Opinion*, 10. *Lettre du Comité Colonial de France, au Comité colonial de Saint-Domingue; * * ** (Paris, 1788), 6, 92.

¹⁸ *Lettre du Comité colonial de France*, 8-11, 13-17. Gouy d'Arsy, *Première Dénonciation*, 36.

¹⁹ The nine commissioners were Duc de Choiseul-Praslin, Marquis de Gouy d'Arsy, Duc de Cereste-Brancas, Comte de Reynaud, De Peyrac, Comte de Magallon, Marquis de Paroy, Chevalier Dougé, and Marquis de Perrigny. After two months, Duc de Cereste-Brancas was replaced by Comte de Vaudreuil. *Lettre du Comité colonial de France*, 13.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 8-9, 19, 67.

triously pulled at Versailles; and on September 4 a deputation styling themselves the 'Commissioners of San Domingo' appeared before the Minister of Marine, La Luzerne, and presented their petition"²¹ now endorsed by a "volume" of signatures.²² The Minister received his callers politely, read their petition aloud and commented on its phraseology, and promised to lay it before the King; but he steadfastly declined to recognize the bearers of it as commissioners of Santo Domingo because there was nothing to guarantee that the signatures were genuine.²³ A few days later, on the advice of the King, he drew up a memorial for the *Conseil d'Etat*, in which he reasoned as follows: There are about twenty-five thousand adult citizens resident in Santo Domingo. Supposing the four thousand signatures to be genuine, which can not be proved, they represent less than one-sixth the population of the colony. The other five-sixths were either opposed or indifferent or not consulted. If the petition had passed through the hands of the Governor and the Intendant, spurious signatures could have been detected. The devious and irregular way which the petition has travelled from the colony to the King indicates that it can not bear the full light of day. Can we then, the Minister asks, consider the credentials of the so-called commissioners of Santo Domingo as valid? Are we to allow this colony to have deputies in the approaching Estates General? The *Conseil d'Etat* answered both questions in the negative, and then the King, in justice to the colony, forbade the Minister of Marine to correspond with the nine so-called commissioners of Santo Domingo or to have other dealings with them that might seem to imply a recognition of their preten-

²¹ Stoddard, *op. cit.*, 70.

²² *Lettre du Comité colonial de France*, 44-45.

²³ *Ibid.* La Luzerne, *Mémoire*, 5-6. Gouy d'Arsy, *Première Dénonciation*, 37.

sions.²⁴ Two days later, September 13, two of the commissioners waited on the Minister and received intelligence that a decision in their case had been reached by the King in council. "But what was decided, M. le Comte?" "That, Gentlemen," he answered, "you may never know; the King has forbidden me to tell you; it is a secret of state."²⁵ Full of surprise, anger, and contempt, the commissioners resolved to pass the word to the planters at Cap Français and advise that the agitation be carried on in the colony. In a long letter to these constituents, dated September 15, they call attention to the "critical position of the Ministry, the systematic indecision of the Court," and to what a little audacity had already been able to accomplish in Bretagne, Dauphiné, Provence and Béarn. They advised the planters to act secretly and promptly so as to circumvent the royal Administrators.²⁶ Thus was the campaign transferred from France to Santo Domingo.

When this letter reached Santo Domingo, events began to move rapidly. The Chamber of Agriculture, a small organization composed of planters, took the initiative and addressed a memorial to the Administration, November 7, in which it demanded that the colony be allowed to send deputies to the Estates General.²⁷ The Administration, taken unawares and wanting instructions from Versailles,²⁸ sought to temporize by reply-

²⁴ La Luzerne, *Mémoire*, 5-11.

²⁵ Gouy d'Arsy, *Première Dénonciation*, 38. *Lettre du Comité colonial de France*, 103-104.

²⁶ *Lettre du Comité colonial de France*, 110, 112. This letter, frequently cited above, contains 135 printed pages in 8°.

²⁷ *Lettre bien Importante de la Chambre d'Agriculture de Saint-Domingue, adressée aux Membres du Comité colonial Sçant à Paris* (Paris, 1788), 5, 15-16.

²⁸ *Mémoire et Observations du Sieur Barbé-Marbois, Intendant des Isles-sous-le-Vent* * * * (Paris, 1790), 10. *Pièces justificatives des Faits énoncés dans le Mémoire de M. le Comte de La Luzerne*, * * * * (Paris, 1790), 8.

ing, November 16, that nothing could be done about the matter until the will of the colony could be ascertained. Straightway the Chamber demanded that the colony be given an opportunity to express its will and, without further delay, the Chamber issued a plan for the convocation of popular assemblies to elect deputies to the Estates General.²⁹ And then the Governor bestirred himself and issued an ordinance in which he condemned the action of the Chamber of Agriculture, forbade the meeting of popular assemblies and threatened to prosecute to the fullest extent of the law whosoever dared disobey; but he authorized the colonists to vote for or against representation in the Estates General by means of letters, each signed by no more than five persons, addressed to the Administration.³⁰ But this ordinance was almost completely ignored. In defiance of the Governor's commands, a few of the planters—it is impossible to say how many—met in secret assemblies and elected thirty-one deputies to the Estates General.³¹ Whether these deputies would be admitted was another question.

After the Estates General had been in session for more than a month, eight individuals calling themselves deputies from Santo Domingo appeared at Versailles and, on June 8, made overtures for admission.³² The Clergy and the Nobility gave them a cold

²⁹ *Lettre bien Importante*, 5-6, 10-11, 15-16.

³⁰ *Pièces justificatives*, 6. *Extrait des Pièces justificatives*, 25-26. Gouy d'Arisy, *Première Dénonciation*, 42-44.

³¹ *Opinion de M. de Cocherel*. * * * (In the *Moniteur*, December 1, 1789, p. 30). *Journal des Etats-généraux*, I 349, 352. Gouy d'Arisy, *Première Dénonciation*, 45. The names of the deputies elected in the Northern Province of Santo Domingo are given in *Que ceux qui ont une Ame lisent ceci* (Cap Français, 1789), 7-8. For the entire list see Brette, *Les Constituants* (Paris, 1897). 187-189.

³² The names of these so-called deputies were Comte de Reynaud, Comte de Magallon, Marquis de Perrigny, Marquis de Gouy d'Arisy, Chevalier Dougé, Marquis de Rouvray, Chevalier Cocherel, and Bodkin-

reception, but the Third Estate, hard pressed in the struggle with the privileged orders, admitted them provisionally "with testimonies of affection."³³ Nevertheless, it was generally known that their election was irregular, the King not having asked the colonies to send deputies, and for a time it looked as though nothing more would be done about the matter. But on June 13, at the end of the general roll call, Gouy d'Arsy expressed surprise at not having heard the Secretary call the names of the deputies for Santo Domingo, and thereupon the "Dean", after having consulted the assembly, asked the colonists to bring forward their credentials. With this request they readily complied, saying graciously that they wished to sit among the "Commons" without distinction of birth.³⁴

The question of their definitive admission was now ready for decision and, on June 14, in the name of the twentieth *bureau*, Redon made a report on their credentials. And the report was unfavorable. Redon pointed out that the King had not asked the colonists to send deputies and that, moreover, the credentials under consideration were not conclusive proof that Santo Domingo desired deputies. But as this report was apparently regarded as only preliminary, the assembly took no action at the time and the colonists continued to sit provisionally as deputies without the right to vote.³⁵ At length, on June 19, a committee

Fitz-Gerald. It will be observed that the first five names here mentioned were on the list of the nine commissioners of Santo Domingo (See *ante*, p. 7). The other three men had come directly from the colony.

³³ *Journal inédit de Jallet*, * * * (Published by J. J. Brethé; Fontenay-le-Comte, 1871), 81-82. *Récit des Séances des Députés des Communes depuis le 5 Mai 1789 jusqu'au 12 Juin suivant* (Réimpression par F. A. Aulard, Paris, 1895), 97. *Journal d'Adrien Duquesnoy*, * * * * (Published by Robert Crèveœur; Paris, 1894), I 80, 91.

³⁴ *Procès-verbal de l'Assemblée nationale* (Started on June 12, 1789), le 12 juin 1789 jusqu'au 17 juin, p. 39. *Journal de Duquesnoy*, I 91.

³⁵ *Procès-verbal* (June 12-17, 1789), 78.

on credentials was appointed and charged especially with the task of reporting on the credentials of the deputies for Santo Domingo. That evening the committee held a meeting and Gouy d'Arsy and three of his colleagues appeared before it. In reply to the objections raised by Redon, Gouy d'Arsy declared that the elections in Santo Domingo had been conducted almost exactly as had been the elections in France, and argued that the colony should not be deprived of representatives simply because the King had neglected to ask it to send deputies. Santo Domingo, said he, has wealth and importance. Reason demands that the colony have a representation. "You know what it cost England to decide this question with arms in her hands instead of deciding it in accordance with the invariable laws of reason and natural equity."³⁶ This florid argument seems to have had weight, for, on June 20, when the colonists, amid the enthusiasm of that great day, asked permission as deputies to sign the tennis court oath and thus cast their lot with the Third Estate in that hour of danger, the President of the National Assembly announced that the committee on credentials had unanimously decided to recommend the *provisional* admission of twelve deputies for Santo Domingo with the right to vote. The recommendation was adopted by acclamation and the colonial deputies affixed their signatures to the oath.³⁷ This was a decision pregnant with consequences, for it was a virtual admission that the colonies had the right to be represented in the Parliament of the nation. No European country had ever before been so generous. But the colonial deputies, though they were grateful, were not minded to admit that generosity was all on one

³⁶ *Point du Jour*, no. 3, p. 18. Barère, editor of this journal, was a member of the committee on credentials and noted down what Gouy d'Arsy said. Cf. *Procès-verbal*, no. 2, pp. 2-5. *Journal de Duquesnoy*, I 110.

³⁷ *Procès-verbal*, no. 3, p. 7. *Journal des États-généraux*, I 169.

side. "Santo Domingo," said Gouy d'Arsy, "was still in her swaddling clothes when she gave herself to Louis XIV; now that she is great and powerful she gives herself to the nation."³⁸

The question of their definitive admission came up again for discussion on June 27. The reporter of the committee on credentials, as if he had learned his arguments from the colonists themselves, emphasized the extent, the wealth, the population, and the commercial importance of Santo Domingo, and declared it the unanimous opinion of the committee that the colony should have deputies. As had already been foreshadowed, this recommendation was adopted unanimously by the National Assembly.³⁹ The point about irregular elections was passed over in complete silence, and the flood-gates of debate opened upon the question whether Santo Domingo should have twelve or twenty deputies. In determining the number, the inquiry was made: Should slaves be counted as part of the population? Several deputies took occasion to speak of the evils of slavery and to commend warmly the efforts being made by the *Société des Amis des Noirs*. A motion to take into consideration the eventual emancipation of the slaves was even made and applauded, but the discussion was suddenly interrupted and postponed by the appearance of several members of the Clergy and the Nobility who came in to take seats in the National Assembly.⁴⁰ The enthusiasm and the feeling of good fellowship which greeted the arrival of the newcomers extricated the colonists from a very embarrassing predicament.

When consideration of the question was resumed on July 3 Mirabeau, who, though probably not an *Ami des Noirs*, sym-

³⁸ *Journal de Duquesnoy*, I. 114-115.

³⁹ *Procès-verbal*, no. 9, pp. 5-6.

⁴⁰ *Point du Jour*, no. 10, pp. 61-65. *Journal des Etats-généraux*, I 259-262. *Journal de Jallet*, 107.

pathized with the purpose of the society, completely demolished the argument in favor of a large deputation. To base representation on wealth and commercial importance, he said, is ridiculous. It is true that Santo Domingo puts much money into circulation and gives much support to manufactures: so do the peasants of France: so do the maritime cities. Why not give these a representation based on commercial importance? No! the only acceptable basis is population. But since the mulattoes, the free blacks and the slaves are not allowed to vote, how much population is left? In Santo Domingo there are only about twenty-five thousand whites. Then let the number of deputies for Santo Domingo be in proportion to this constituency.⁴¹ After this cogent reasoning had been offered, general opinion, hitherto favorable to twenty deputies, veered round to four. Gouy d'Arsy, "one of the greatest sayers of nothing I ever knew," as an observant deputy characterized him,⁴² attempted a reply to Mirabeau. He declared testily that the National Assembly knew nothing about the colonies. The mulattoes, he said, had of course never been allowed to vote in elections; such a privilege would give them too much influence and make them too presumptuous in a land where the whites form only about one-twentieth of the population; but the interests of the mulattoes are always amply safeguarded by the planters, their natural patrons and protectors. As to slavery and the slave trade, touch those institutions, he said, with a trembling hand unless you can find, in your wisdom, some other way to make the colonies great and prosperous. The National Assembly has already voted to admit twelve deputies provisionally; it can not afford now to stultify

⁴¹ *Journal des États-généraux*, I 324-326. *Point du Jour*, no. 15, p. 99. *Journal de Jallet*, 114-115.

⁴² *Journal de Duquesnoy*, I. 160.

itself by reducing that number.⁴³ But, of course, to men imbued with the doctrines of the sacred and imprescriptible rights of man, Gouy d'Arsy's speech sounded strange and immoral. "This reasoning," wrote a deputy, "made upon my mind an impression quite opposite to what the speaker intended; it seemed to savor of an inhumane policy, and I doubt not that others had a similar impression."⁴⁴

The debate dragged on into the session of July 4, and cries of "question, question, a thousand times repeated"⁴⁵ gave evidence of the general impatience. After awhile the President had a Secretary read a communication from a number of colonists whom by-standers understood to be a new deputation from Santo Domingo. "How can these gentlemen pretend," so ran the letter, "to represent Santo Domingo? The formalities which make elections valid were not observed at all. The so-called deputies were elected in assemblies of fifteen or twenty persons. Though their credentials bear the signatures of a great number of persons, the signatures were obtained by over-persuasion or after the elections were over. The instructions of the so-called deputies were given in blank, and can never bind the colony. The undersigned pray the National Assembly to take these facts into consideration and suspend judgment in the matter until the colony can legitimize the powers of the deputies by a regular election. If the National Assembly insists on going ahead and ignoring this petition, the colonists of Santo Domingo make bold to declare that they will protest against everything that may be done."⁴⁶ This created a momentary diversion and voices were

⁴³ *Point du Jour*, no. 15, pp. 99-100; no. 16, p. 107. *Journal des États-généraux*, I. 326-336.

⁴⁴ *Journal de Jallet*, 115-116.

⁴⁵ *Courrier de Versailles à Paris et de Paris à Versailles* (by Gorsas, started on July 5, 1789), no. 1, p. 9.

⁴⁶ *Journal des États-généraux*, I. 351-352.

heard demanding that the petition be granted; but Gouy d'Arsy and others insisted that the question of a colonial representation be decided without further delay. So the National Assembly decreed that six deputies for Santo Domingo should be admitted with the right to vote and that the other members of the colonial deputation should be recognized as *suppléants*.⁴⁷ Thus the deed had been done without recall: colonial deputies had been definitively admitted to the Parliament of the nation, and Santo Domingo had been drawn into the Revolution.

The communication which created a momentary diversion on July 4 needs to be explained. From the beginning of the movement, there were in France many proprietors who did not favor a colonial representation in the Estates General. When asked to sign the petition to the King, in August, 1788, they refused, saying that the colonists in France did not have sufficient authorization to proceed with the matter, that the colonists resident in Santo Domingo might disclaim all responsibility for the result in case the proposed representation proved detrimental to colonial interests, and that, since it was the custom to harp so much on the wealth of Santo Domingo, the Estates General might decide to tax the colony heavily to relieve the deficit in the royal treasury. It would be much better, they said, to bear

⁴⁷ *Procès-verbal*, no. 15, pp. 4-5. *Journal des Etats-généraux*, I. 352-353. *Point du Jour*, no. 16, pp. 107-108.

On July 7, the National Assembly was informed by the colonial deputation that the following six had been elected to sit in the house and vote: Gouy d'Arsy, Cocherel, Perrigny, Gerard, Thebaudières, and Larchevesque-Thibaud; and that the following would be *suppléants*: Reynaud, Rouvray, Villeblanche, de Noë, O'Gorman, Magallon, Courrejolles, Dougé, Legardeur de Tilly, de Marmé, Bodkin Fitz-Gerald, and Duval Mouville. *Procès-verbal*, no. 17, pp. 10-11. The names of Larchevesque-Thibaud and Thebaudières soon disappear from the records of the debates, and those of Reynaud, Courrejolles, and others appear as names of active deputies. Apparently, then, a *suppléant* might take the place of a deputy without consulting the National Assembly.

existing ills a little longer and to look to the King for ultimate redress of grievances than to participate in a revolution the end of which no man could foresee.⁴⁸ But to this timely warning the nine commissioners of Santo Domingo paid little heed, going ahead, as we have seen, with their campaign for a representation.

After the petition had been presented to the King and the *Conseil d'Etat* and been rejected,⁴⁹ these conservative proprietors seem to have slumbered and slept till deputies appeared at Versailles, in June, 1789, claiming to represent Santo Domingo. Then there was a general awakening which grew into genuine alarm when the so-called deputies ranged themselves on the side of the revolutionary Third Estate. On June 20, the day of the tennis court oath, thirty of these conservatives resident in Paris drafted the communication which was read to the National Assembly on July 4.⁵⁰ Very soon afterwards the unfavorable mention of slavery in the debates, the discussion of the Declaration of the Rights of Man, and the revolutionary orgy on the night of the Fourth of August convinced the conservatives that it would be the better part of wisdom to repudiate the so-called deputies for Santo Domingo for whom they had not voted, to keep the National Assembly, if possible, from deciding anything relative to colonial affairs, to strengthen the tottering fabric of royal authority in the colonies, and to wait for better days.⁵¹ With these ends in view, sixty or seventy proprietors met in Paris on August 20, 1789, the day on which the first clause of the Declaration of the Rights of Man became constitutional law, and organized the *Société correspondante des Colons français*, popularly

⁴⁸ *Lettre du Comité colonial de France*, 76-78.

⁴⁹ See *ante*, p. 8.

⁵⁰ Minutes of the Masiac Club, Archives Nationales, Dxxv. 85.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* Cf. Letter of the Massiac Club to the provincial assemblies of Santo Domingo, dated April 10, 1790. Arch. Nat., Dxxv. 86.

known as the Massiac Club.⁵² From this time on, the Massiac Club was busy trying to counteract the influence of the *Amis des Noirs*, hold in check the colonial deputies in the National Assembly, and keep the Revolution out of the colonies.

The six colonial deputies and their *suppléants*, at the beginning of their parliamentary career, found themselves halting between confidence and fear and attempting the difficult feat of travelling two divergent roads simultaneously. On July 29, in order to circumvent the schemes of their colonial opponents, they demanded of the Minister of Marine the assurance that no new elections would be held in Santo Domingo, that no colonial assembly be summoned, and that no innovations be made in the colonial administration, except as the National Assembly might direct.⁵³ But this confidence was of short duration. On the night of the Fourth of August, Gouy d'Arisy was asked to proclaim for the colonies the emancipation of the slaves;⁵⁴ and on August 12, the embarrassed deputies wrote to their constituents in this tenor: "People here are drunk with liberty. A society of enthusiasts who call themselves *Amis des Noirs* is carrying on open agitation against us. It is spying out a favorable opportunity to explode against slavery. Should we be so unfortunate

⁵² The number of proprietors present may be approximately determined by the fact that, on August 20, sixty-eight votes were cast on a question, and on August 23, sixty-six votes were cast for President and sixty-three for Vice President. Minutes of the Massiac Club. Arch. Nat., Dxxv. 85. Gouy d'Arisy makes the statement (*Première Dénonciation*, 134-137) that the number present was sixty or eighty. Raymond states positively (*Véritable Origine*, 16-18) that the Massiac Club was in existence at the end of July, 1789, but the minutes of the Club show that Raymond's memory played him false.

⁵³ Minutes of the Massiac Club, Arch. Nat., Dxxv. 85. La Luzerne, *Mémoire*, 114-116. *Extrait des Pièces justificatives*, 80-83. *Pièces justificatives*, 39.

⁵⁴ Gouy d'Arisy, *Confession d'un Député dans ses Derniers Moments*, * * * (Paris, 1791), 4. *Patriote français*, no. 14, p. 2.

as to pronounce the word *slave*, the occasion would be sized to demand the emancipation of our negroes. The fear that this misfortune may befall us makes us keep silent despite ourselves. The time is not favorable for us to ask the National Assembly to consider our plan for guaranteeing ourselves against the danger which threatens us * * * * The peril is great * * * it is near. * * * Arrest suspects, seize writings in which the word *liberty* appears. Double the guard on your plantations, in the villages. * * * * Distrust mulattoes who arrive from Europe. * * * ⁵⁵ Evidently fear had succeeded confidence.

And events during the last weeks of August were not of a nature to allay their fears. Clause after clause of the Declaration of the Rights of Man was adopted, and Mirabeau, a man of no little influence, was rejoicing in his newspaper, the *Courier de Provence*, that this declaration of fundamental law would be no less applicable to the colonies than to the mother country.⁵⁶ In this crisis the deputies, genuinely alarmed, turned to their opponents of the Massiac Club for comfort and counsel. Working together the two factions drew up a plan by which the desired reforms in the colonies could be obtained without interference from the revolutionary National Assembly. The plan provided that the King should summon a popular assembly in Santo Domingo, which, in turn, should draft a constitution for the colony and send it to France for the direct sanction of the King. In this way the National Assembly would be left entirely out of account. Accordingly, the deputies and the Massiac Club, on September 16 and 18, addressed identical notes to the Minister of Marine, asking that he put their plan into execution.

⁵⁵ *Lettre des Députés de Saint-Domingue à leurs Commettans, en Date du 12 Août 1789* (Paris, 1790). This letter is also printed in *Courier de Provence*, no. III, pp. 471-474.

⁵⁶ *Courier de Provence*, no. 30.

The Minister readily consented, and on September 27 forwarded the plan to the colony with the necessary orders for its execution. But by this time the colonial deputies, their panic having somewhat subsided, took occasion to pause and reflect on the probable consequences of their action. The Minister of Marine, La Luzerne, was an ex-Governor of Santo Domingo and heartily disliked by the planters. Moreover, the planters were just now endeavoring to "shake off the yoke of ministerial despotism." So that any plan emanating from the office of the Minister of Marine would be received in the colony with suspicion and misgiving. As the colonial deputies reflected on these things they became aware that they were making a mistake, and at the eleventh hour they found fault with certain clauses of the plan, which they claimed had been added without their approval, and wrote to the colony opposing its execution.⁵⁷ Thus the burden of unpopularity, if there should be any, would recoil upon the heads of the Minister of Marine and the members of the Massiac Club. The deputies had reverted to their original policy of recognizing the paramount authority of the National Assembly.

In fact, touching the matter of the navigation laws, the deputies had already despaired of obtaining from the King redress for the colonial grievances. On May 9, 1789, the Governor of Santo Domingo, moved by the planters' plea of urgent necessity, had thrown open three ports for five years to the free introduction of foreign grain; but on July 2 the King had annulled the Governor's ordinance, on the ground that it tended to injure French commerce, and recalled the Governor.⁵⁸ Consequently, the dep-

⁵⁷ Minutes of the Massiac Club, Arch. Nat., Dxxv. 85. Letter of the Massiac Club to the provincial assemblies of Santo Domingo, dated April 10, 1790. Arch. Nat., Dxxv. 86. La Luzerne, *Mémoire*, 114-116. *Pièces justif.*, 42. *Extrait des Pièces justif.*, 102-104, 107. Gouy d'Arisy, *Première Dénonciation*, 135-137, 139. Garran, *op. cit.*, I. 56-59.

⁵⁸ *Arrêt du Conseil d'Etat du Roi, du 2 Juillet 1789.*

uties had now no other recourse than to the National Assembly. And so, on August 28, at the very time, curiously enough, that, according to their statement in the letter of August 12, they dared not mention colonial affairs lest the *Amis des Noirs* should denounce slavery, and at the very time that they were deep in intrigue with the Massiac Club for the removal of all questions relative to the interior régime of Santo Domingo from the jurisdiction of the revolutionary National Assembly, they began to vociferate demands in the National Assembly for a suspension of the navigation laws. Advantage was taken of a proposition made by the committee on subsistences, August 28, to grant free circulation of grain within the kingdom of France, and the demand was made that the colonies be permitted to import grain from the United States. Cocherel drew a pathetic picture of the famishing colonists and of the helpless slaves dying of hunger—a condition due, he said, to the failure of the French merchants to furnish flour. This aroused the indignation of the merchants, who replied that Cocherel's picture was woefully overdrawn, that the colonists had flour in plenty and that the slaves were not allowed, anyway, to eat flour bread. The altercation lasted through four evening sessions and was at times bitter, involving the integrity of the Minister of Marine. Finally, the National Assembly, though seemingly a little hesitant about taking the matter in hand, decided on September 3 to submit the question to a committee of six disinterested persons chosen from the committee on agriculture and commerce.⁵⁹ This special committee set to work at once and drafted a report in which the arguments on both sides were carefully weighed and the recommendation

⁵⁹ *Précis de la Séance de l'Assemblée nationale, Vendredi 28 Août, Sept Heures du Soir. Journal des Débats et des Décrets*, no. 2, pp. 1-2; no. 4, pp. 3-4; no. 10, pp. 1-4. *Point du Jour*, no. 69, pp. 261-264; no. 72, pp. 297-299. *Journal des États-généraux*, III. 212-215. *Procès-verbal*, no. 63, pp. 9-11; no. 66, pp. 5-6; no. 70, p. 6.

was made that, if the merchants should ever fail to provision the colonies abundantly and at reasonable prices, the colonists should appeal to the executive power for protection.⁶⁰ In other words, the navigation laws were not to be modified or suspended. This report, however, was never presented to the National Assembly. After a few weeks of controversy, carried on through the press, the colonial deputies decided to make peace with the merchants; for there was now arising another question before which planter and merchant needed to show a united front.⁶¹ This was the mulatto question.

"In Paris," as Stoddard correctly states, "there had long existed a community of wealthy mulattoes, come thither to obtain a European education or to escape the rigors of the color line."⁶² These men had been closely watching the Revolution and planning how they might best derive advantage from it. At the end of August, when the Declaration of the Rights of Man was adopted, they perceived that their hour had struck. Under the guidance of a white lawyer, named de Joly, whom they retained as counsel, they held a series of conferences and drew up *cahiers* of grievances. But instead of appealing directly to the National Assembly, they followed the advice of Malouet, a national deputy of considerable reputation, and appealed first to the Massiac Club to recognize their sacred and inalienable rights as men.⁶³ But the Massiac Club proved intractable and uncompromising on this point. Though it received a deputation of the mulattoes in its

⁶⁰ *Rapport fait au Nom de la Section du Comité d'Agriculture et de Commerce chargé par l'Assemblée nationale de l'Examen de la Réclamation des Députés de Saint-Domingue, relative à l'Approvisionnement de l'Isle* (Paris, 1789).

⁶¹ *Correspondance secrète des Députés de Saint-Domingue avec les Comités de cette Isle* (Paris, l'An de la Liberté I), 33-34.

⁶² Stoddard, *op. cit.*, 84.

⁶³ Malouet, *Collection de Mémoires sur les Colonies* (Paris, An X), IV. 11-12.

assembly hall and listened politely to what they had to say, it just as politely rejected their overtures. Then the mulattoes determined to appeal to the court of public opinion. Accordingly, they drew up a minute account of their reception at the Massiac Club and published the account in pamphlet form.⁶⁴ Those who chose to read might comprehend how righteous was the cause of the mulattoes and how contemptuous was the attitude of the planters.

However, the mulattoes could not point to original petitions or produce other evidence to prove that their brothers across the sea were discontented with their lot, and the planters began at once to see to it that no mulattoes returned to the colonies to circulate petitions. On Septemebr 18, the colonial deputies wrote thus to the chambers of commerce of the various maritime cities: "We pray you earnestly to use every precaution in your power to hinder negroes and mulattoes from embarking for the colonies."⁶⁵ And in letters to the Massiac Club the merchants and ship owners of Havre, Bordeaux, Nantes and Saint Malo give the assurance that they will not permit negroes and mulattoes to go aboard their vessels.⁶⁶ Also there was information from Cap Français that on October 23, when seven ships were sighted in the offing, the provincial committee appointed twenty agents to go on board, take temporary possession of packages, and bring the passengers before the committee, lest any mulatto or *Ami de Noirs* effect a landing in the colony.⁶⁷ Thus the mulattoes in Paris were isolated and left to their own devices.

⁶⁴ *Extrait du Procès-verbal de l'Assemblée de Citoyens—libres et propriétaires de Couleur des Isles et Colonies françaises, Constituée sous le Titre de Colons Américains* (Paris, 12 septembre 1789).

⁶⁵ *Correspondance secrète*, 11. Raimond, *Véritable Origine*, 20.

⁶⁶ Papers of the Massiac Club, Arch, Nat., Dxxv. 85.

⁶⁷ *Extrait des Registres de la Députation de Saint-Domingue* (Paris 1789), 6. *Correspondance secrète*, 52-53.

Moreover, the colonial deputies were planning to forestall any attempt which the mulattoes might make to gain the ear of the National Assembly. On September 20, a colonial deputy wrote to his constituents as follows: "The mulattoes united at Paris under the leadership of Sieur de Joly, avocat, have presented a request to the President of the National Assembly for permission to be heard at the bar concerning their claims to the rights of citizenship, conformably to article 59 of the Black Code. I think it would be better to anticipate this move of the mulattoes. I think it better that the mulattoes owe this justice to the colony rather than to the National Assembly. In consequence, my advice is going to be that we inform the National Assembly that, being occupied with the amelioration of the lot of our negroes, we have represented to our constituents the justice of allowing the mulattoes to enjoy the rights of citizenship; and, in consequence, we shall ask the National Assembly to refer *to the colonial assemblies* the question of regulating the conditions and qualifications necessary for the mulattoes to enjoy the rights of citizenship * * * It has been determined among ourselves by a majority of votes that the response will be made to the National Assembly that the wishes of the mulattoes have already been anticipated by the colonial deputies, who wrote some time ago to their constituents, in the colony, in favor of this class of citizens which ought to be precious in the eyes of all the inhabitants, and that it is not doubtful that the representations made on this subject by the colonial deputation will have the desired effect."⁶⁸

And yet, notwithstanding these precautions and schemes on the part of the white colonists, they themselves indicated to the mulattoes the road that promised well to lead to success. On September 22, two deputies for Guadeloupe, elected by white

⁶⁸ *Correspondance secrète*, 12-13.

colonists in Paris, were admitted to the National Assembly without opposition;⁶⁹ and, on October 14, two deputies for Martinique, similarly elected, were also admitted.⁷⁰ So the mulattoes, perceiving that the way was smooth and the travelling easy, decided to make a definite demand that colored deputies be admitted to the National Assembly, on the ground that the white deputies did not represent this class of citizens. Accordingly, on October 22, de Joly led his mulatto clients to the bar of the National Assembly and delivered an address which ran in part as follows: "The free colored citizens and proprietors of the French isles and colonies have the honor to remind you that there still exists in one province of this Empire a race of men debased and degraded; a class of citizens devoted to contempt, to all the humiliations of slavery; in a word, Frenchmen who groan under the yoke of oppression * * * Born citizens and free, they live strangers in their own fatherland. Excluded from all employments, from all professions, from all dignities, they are even forbidden to engage in mechanical trades. Subjected to distinctions the most debasing, they find themselves slaves in the land of liberty. But the Estates General are convoked * * * The cry of liberty resounds in the other hemisphere * * * And now they come to solicit in this august Assembly a representation

⁶⁹ *Procès-verbal*, no. 81, pp. 20-21. *Point du Jour*, no. 88, pp. 84-85. *Journal des Etats-généraux*, IV. 121-122.

⁷⁰ *Procès-verbal*, no. 100, p. 7. *Point du Jour*, no. 109, pp. 335-336.

The two deputies for Guadeloupe were de Curt and de Galbert. Later, on July 27, 1790, three more deputies for Guadeloupe (Chabert de Lachière, Nadal de Saintrac and Robert Coquille) were admitted. *Procès-verbal*, no. 362, p. 16. The two deputies for Martinique were Moreau de Saint-Méry and Arthur Dillon. On September 19, 1790, two deputies for the possessions in India (Beylié and Louis Monneron) were admitted. *Ibid.*, no. 416, p. 6. On February 12, 1791, two deputies for the Ile de France (Pierre Monneron and de Missy) were admitted. *Ibid.*, no. 560, p. 8. Thus the entire colonial deputation in the Constituent Assembly finally numbered seventeen.

which will put them in position to assert their rights and defend their interests against the tyrannical pretensions of the whites

* * * ⁷¹

The whole speech was finely phrased and the story of grievances rang true. It was to remedy just such evils as these that the Revolution had been started. So the President of the National Assembly responded that neither wide seas nor class prejudice could ever drown the cry of the oppressed, and asked the mulattoes to leave at the Secretary's desk their petition and credentials.⁷² "Emotions of the most pure sensibility" and prolonged applause gave unmistakable evidence that the hearers were favorably disposed. The mulattoes were invited to remain in the hall as honored guests, and it was voted that the address of de Joly and the President's response should be spread entire upon the official minutes⁷³ and, of course, be read again the next morning.

The mulattoes now fully expected that their petition would be granted;⁷⁴ but they had miscalculated the hostile influence of the numerous colonial proprietors and merchant deputies in the National Assembly. Twice the committee on credentials attempted to recommend the admission of two colored deputies, and twice such a storm of protest was raised on the floor that the reporter's voice could not be heard.⁷⁵ So the recommendation was never

⁷¹ *Procès-verbal*, no. 105, pp. 2-9.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

⁷³ *Journal des Etats-généraux*, V. 139. *Point du Jour*, no. 114, p. 409. *Patriote français*, no. 77, p. 3.

⁷⁴ *Extrait du Procès-verbal de l'Assemblée générale des Citoyens libres de Couleur, des Isles & Colonies françaises* * * * Du 31 octobre 1789 (s. n. l. d.), 7.

⁷⁵ *Observations de M. de Cocherel, Député de Saint-Domingue, à l'Assemblée nationale, sur la Demande des Mulâtres* (Paris, s.d.), 6. *Pétition nouvelle des Citoyens de Couleur des Iles françaises à l'Assemblée nationale*; * * * (Paris, 18 mars 1791), 9. Raimond, *Véritable Origine*,

made. The colonial deputies desired that their number be increased, it is true, but not by the addition of colored deputies.

The danger was over for the moment, but the colonial deputies saw what must speedily be done. Another petition from the mulattoes might set the hall of the National Assembly ringing with appeals to revolutionary principles and cause slavery and class distinctions to be declared illegal and outrageous. Such questions, therefore, must be kept off the floor of the House and intrusted to a committee composed only of those who were most interested in the preservation of slavery and the political supremacy of the planters.⁷⁶

On October 27, the King's ministers unwittingly played into the hands of the colonial deputies by calling the attention of the National Assembly to the fact that the colonies differed fundamentally from France in the matter of climate, products and social characteristics, and that the King had feared to send any of the new decrees to the colonies for execution lest disastrous results might follow. Therefore, the ministers hoped that the National Assembly would be good enough to indicate to them what course to pursue.⁷⁷ The question was referred to the committee on agriculture and commerce, and the colonial deputies were ordered to assist this committee in the solution of the problem.⁷⁸

This turn of events gave the colonial deputies their cue. On November 26, de Curt of Guadeloupe, speaking for the entire

19. Grégoire, *Lettre aux Philantropes* (in *Courier de Provence*, XI), 119-120. Statement of Grégoire to the National Assembly, *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XXV. 389-390. *Moniteur* (12 mai 1791), 546.

⁷⁶ Stoddard, *op. cit.*, 85. As may be seen from what follows, Stoddard failed completely to understand why de Curt's motion for the appointment of a committee was defeated.

⁷⁷ *Point du Jour*, no. 118, pp. 465-466.

⁷⁸ *Procès-verbal*, no. 109, p. 7.

colonial deputation, referred pointedly to the memorial of the King's ministers and declared that it was the custom of the National Assembly to appoint a special committee to deal with such problems as were here presented and that such a committee needed to be composed of deputies best qualified by knowledge and experience for the task in hand. In the present case, he said, there were questions to be settled relative to the navigation laws, the holding of "agricultural and commercial property" (slaves), and the degree of authority to be intrusted to colonial officials. He therefore moved the appointment of a committee on colonial constitutions, to be composed of the ten colonial deputies and ten merchant deputies engaged in colonial commerce, which should, at the earliest possible moment, present a report to the National Assembly.⁷⁹

On first thought it might seem that all the white colonists would favor a measure which, if put through, would be tantamount to a removal of all colonial questions from the floor of the National Assembly into the quiet of a committee room where planter influence might easily prove paramount. But the motion, for various reasons, met with opposition. One group of white colonists wrote: "This committee once established will arrogate to itself the sole right to propose the innovations and the changes to be made in the islands and, consulting its own judgment alone, it will disdain instructions sent to it from the center of the colonies. We tremble when we think of the probable consequences."⁸⁰ And the Massiac Club, clinging tenaciously to its original policy of opposing all interference in colonial affairs by the revolutionary National Assembly, began planning as early

⁷⁹ *Motion de M. de Curt, Député de Guadeloupe, au Nom des Colonies réunies* (Paris, 1789). *Procès-verbal*, no. 135, p. 21.

⁸⁰ Letter to the Massiac Club from the colonists at Bordeaux, dated January 5, 1790. Arch. Nat., Dxxv. 86.

as November 19 to defeat de Curt's motion. Failing in their efforts to obtain a hearing at the bar, the Massiacs persuaded Blin, a deputy well known at the Club, to voice their sentiments on the floor.⁸¹ A circular letter was then sent out to all proprietors affiliated with the Club, and their signatures were solicited for an address to the National Assembly. "Time is pressing," ran the letter; "it is necessary that our address be ready; M. Blin, deputy from Nantes, has promised to read it in the tribune and support it with a speech."⁸² By November 24, Blin was in possession of the address and waiting for the opportunity to carry out his mission.⁸³

As soon, accordingly, as de Curt, on November 26, had finished speaking, Blin announced that he held in his hand an address signed by more than three hundred proprietors, in which the right of the so-called deputies to represent the colonies was challenged. A storm of protest from the floor greeted this statement;⁸⁴ but Blin continued to speak despite the noise. "The island of Santo Domingo," the address declared, "has about twenty-five thousand white inhabitants. We estimate that, leaving the women and children out of account, only about twelve thousand have the right to vote. Of this number only about four thousand seem to have desired a representation in the National Assembly, and in some manner or other have elected deputies. Even if irregularities be winked at, the so-called deputies can not be said to represent more than about one-third the inhabitants of the

⁸¹ Letter of the Massiac Club to M. Blin, dated November 19, 1789. Arch. Nat., Dxxv. 85.

⁸² Letter of the Massiac Club to its members, dated November 20, 1789. Arch. Nat., Dxxv. 85.

⁸³ Letter of the Massiac Club to Blin. Arch. Nat., Dxxv. 85.

⁸⁴ *Point du Jour*, no. 146, p. 300.

colony."⁸⁵ Then the National Assembly was petitioned to lay on the table all motions relative to colonial affairs until the will of the colonies could be ascertained. The colonial deputies, taken unawares, as it would seem, were unable to make an adequate rejoinder; but they kept up an altercation with Blin until the national deputies, growing tired and hungry, began tumultuously to leave the hall, and the President, noticing this, adjourned the session before any decision had been reached.⁸⁶ On the next day the Massiac Club thanked Blin for his services and prayed him to keep up the fight.⁸⁷

The discussion was opened again, on December 1, by the reading of an address purporting to come from Santo Domingo, which declared that a terrible slave insurrection was going on in Martinique and expressed the fear that all the neighboring islands might soon be in flames. Another address from the deputies extraordinary of commerce and manufactures⁸⁸ corroborated this story, and a colonial deputy seized the occasion to denounce the *Amis des Noirs* as the authors of all these evils. Then de Curt's motion was taken up, and Blin, who made the principal speech of the session, said in substance: It was a mistake in

⁸⁵ Papers of the Massiac Club. Arch. Nat., Dxxv. 86. Cf. *Journal des Etats-généraux*, VI. 163-164.

⁸⁶ *Journal de Duquesnoy*, II. 95. *Procès-verbal*, no. 135, p. 21.

⁸⁷ Letter of the Massiac Club to M. Blin, dated November 27, 1789. Arch. Nat., Dxxv. 85.

⁸⁸ The deputies extraordinary of commerce and manufactures—at first seventeen in number, later twenty-seven—represented the commercial and manufacturing interests of such cities as Marseilles, Lille, Dunkirk, Amiens, Bordeaux, La Rochelle, Nantes, Lorient, Havre, Saint Malo, Dieppe, and Rouen. They were officially recognized by the National Assembly on October 8, 1789, and given reserved seats in the gallery (*Procès-verbal*, no. 95, pp. 11-15; no. 192, p. 25). Till the dissolution of the National Assembly, they remained very much in evidence as a permanent and recognized "lobby" to whose opinion much deference was paid.

the first place to admit the colonial deputies to the National Assembly when it could be proved almost conclusively that their elections were invalid. Now it would be a greater mistake to permit them to have a controlling hand in making the colonial constitutions. Nor does the National Assembly itself have sufficient knowledge of local conditions in the colonies to attempt the task. The only safe and righteous way to deal with the problem is to leave to the colonists themselves the privilege of making their own constitutions, especially those of their interior régime, by means of local assemblies freely and regularly elected. A false move on our part, made in ignorance of local conditions, will inevitably lead to the loss of our colonies. "The affair of the Anglo-American colonies is a prolific source of useful lessons which we should never lose from sight." Blin therefore moved that de Curt's motion be laid on the table.⁸⁹ In reply Gouy d'Arisy pointed out that the colonial assemblies mentioned by Blin would have to be summoned by the executive power and that the planters would not obey a summons issued by La Luzerne, "a minister justly execrated" in all the colonies. At once attention was diverted from the question at issue to this denunciation of the Minister of Marine, and voices were heard on all sides demanding that the speaker furnish proofs of his assertions. At this point, however, the day's session was adjourned amidst the confusion⁹⁰.

The decision of the question was eventually reached at the evening session of December 3. The debate opened with a

⁸⁹ *Opinion de M. Blin, Député de Nantes, * * * 1^{er} Décembre 1789.* Printed by order of the National Assembly. Cf. *Procès-verbal*, no. 139, p. 16.

⁹⁰ For the entire debate of December 1, see *Journal des Etats-généraux*, VI. 238-243; *Point du Jour*, no. 150, pp. 347-349; *Courier de Provence*, no. 74, pp. 11-13; *Journal de Duquesnoy*, II. 119-120; *Procès-verbal*, no. 139, pp. 15-17.

petition from a group of white colonists at Bordeaux that the National Assembly promise definitely never to interfere with the institution of slavery in the colonies.⁹¹ The mulattoes had also submitted a petition that all discussion of de Curt's motion be postponed until their credentials had been verified and accepted;⁹² but the President of the National Assembly kept the latter petition in his pocket and said nothing about it.⁹³ Nevertheless, Abbé Grégoire raised the mulatto question despite the reticence of the President and defended the mulatto cause despite the noise and tumult in the hall. "If there are active citizens in the colonies," he said, "who have grievances to redress, observations to make, or a constitution to demand, surely they have a perfect right to send deputies to the National Assembly. Now justice demands that the mulattoes have a representation. You can not form a colonial committee before you have decided the mulatto question."⁹⁴ Then followed a string of arguments for and against the admission of mulatto deputies and a string of arguments for and against the appointment of a committee on colonial constitutions; but at the close of the session the National Assembly left the mulatto question pending and decreed that for the time being a committee on colonial constitutions was not needed.⁹⁵ There seemed to be a general conviction that the colonies were not properly represented and that the National Assembly lacked

⁹¹ *Journal des Etats-généraux*, VI. 271-272.

⁹² *Supplique et Pétition des Citoyens de Couleur des Isles & Colonies françaises, sur la Motion faite le 27 Novembre 1789, par M. de Curt*
* * * *Du 2 Décembre 1789.*

⁹³ *Journal des Etats-généraux*, VI. 273-277.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 277-278.

⁹⁵ *Procès-verbal*, no. 141, pp. 13-14.

sufficient knowledge of local conditions to deal with the interior régime of the colonies.⁹⁶

Up to this time the mulattoes do not seem to have had any organized support from outsiders. "When we appeared at the bar of the National Assembly [October 22]," writes Raymond, "we were such strangers to the *Société des Amis des Noirs* that we did not know of its existence."⁹⁷ But beginning with November, 1789, an active propaganda was carried on by the *Amis des Noirs* to secure the political enfranchisement of the mulattoes. "The *Société* held a meeting yesterday," we read in the *Patriote français* of December 7. "On motion of M. Brissot de Warville, it was resolved that a vote of thanks be extended, in the name of the *Société*, to MM. l'Abbé Grégoire, Pétion de Villeneuve and Charles Lameth for having defended the cause of the deputies of the colored men in the session of Friday, December 3, and for having developed the principles of equity and humanity which will prepare the way for the abolition of the slave trade and the gradual emancipation of the slaves; * * * that, besides, the Abbé Grégoire will be enrolled among the honorary members of the *Société*."⁹⁸ Thus the enfranchisement of the mulattoes was to be a step toward the emancipation of the slaves.

But the colonial deputies were fully alive to the danger and were carrying on a counter propaganda. On January 11, 1790, they wrote to their constituents as follows: "We have sought out the most influential deputies in the *bureaux*, in the committees, in the various societies, and in the National Assembly itself; we have put the truth before their eyes and

⁹⁶ Cf. *Correspondance de Thomas Lindet pendant la Constituante et la Législative* (1789-1792), 59.

⁹⁷ Raymond, *Réponse aux Considérations de M. Moreau*, 14.

⁹⁸ *Patriote français*, no. 121, p. 2.

won over to our side a great number. We have also scattered broadcast numerous writings calculated to rectify opinions; we have caused pamphlets to be circulated in the cities of commerce, and we have thus aroused the merchants to send in petitions and remonstrances. The merchant deputies in the National Assembly, always our adversaries in regard to the navigation laws, have now found it advisable to unite with us upon all other questions, and their influence has served us well * * * We are quite certain that there is nothing to be feared in regard to the emancipation of the slaves, and little to be feared in regard to the abolition of the slave trade * * * The pretension of the mulattoes has not yet been recognized and we are doing our best to make it come to nothing * * * Upon all questions we feel able to report that, if appearances are not deceptive, the National Assembly will leave untouched those things which interest us, until the colonies have formed their own constitutions, and that the National Assembly will then do no more than confirm these constitutions and pass them on to the King for sanction."⁹⁹

This letter of the colonial deputies summarizes fairly well the situation at the beginning of the year 1790. The mulatto question, the question of the navigation laws, and the question of a committee on colonies had all been left pending. But the efforts of the colonial deputies had not been in vain. The National Assembly had been impressed with the fact that conditions in the colonies differed fundamentally from those in France and that the colonial constitutions should be framed in accordance with recommendations made by colonial assemblies freely and regularly elected.

⁹⁹ *Correspondance secrète*, 32-36.

CHAPTER II.

ADOPTION OF A COLONIAL POLICY

After the election of the thirty-one deputies to the Estates General,¹ quiet reigned in Santo Domingo for several months. The group of planters at Cap Français who had started the agitation for a representation contented themselves with the establishment of provincial committees, against which the Government took no action.² But on September 18, 1789, news of the taking of the Bastille reached Cap Français³ and created great popular excitement. Crowds of *petits-blancs* gathered in the streets and discussed the Revolution and what it meant for the colony.⁴ The tri-colored cockade was adopted amid wild transports of joy, and government officials who refused to wear it or to take the "civic oath" were subjected to ill-treatment and violence.⁵ But, on the other hand, the mulattoes were forbidden by the *petits-blancs* to wear the sacred emblem or take part in the public rejoicing, and, if they persisted in doing so, they were insulted and sometimes hanged.⁶ Race prejudice was further inflamed by the letter which the colonial deputies wrote

¹ See *ante*, p. 10.

² Stoddard, *op. cit.*, 90.

³ Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Considérations présentées aux vrais Amis du Repos et du Bonheur de la France* (Paris, 1791), 19.

⁴ Gatereau, *Histoire des Troubles de S.-Domingue*, * * * (Paris, 1792), 7.

⁵ Gouy d'Arsy, *Première Dénonciation*, 153-154. Garran, *op. cit.*, I. 71-78.

⁶ *Correspondance de Julien Raimond, avec ses Frères, de Saint-Domingue, et les Pièces qui lui ont été adressées par eux* (Paris, l'An Deuxième de la République française), 4. Gatereau, *op. cit.*, 20-25.

on August 12,⁷ and by rumors that mulattoes newly come from France were hiding in the forest ready to start an insurrection and massacre the whites and seize control of the government.⁸

Soon a revolutionary movement, similar to that in France a few months earlier, spread to all parts of the colony. The King's officials were set at defiance, and armed bands of *petits-blancs* went about from place to place murdering, pillaging, and terrorizing the mulattoes.⁹ Soon, too, it was noticed that the slaves were disturbed by the general commotion and by vague rumors that they were all going to be free. "On October 21," writes Moreau de Saint-Méry, of conditions at Cap Français, "excitement among the slaves was reported. Immediately drums were beating, the tocsin was ringing and alarm guns were sounding;"¹⁰ and during an entire night the inhabitants remained under arms to repel the attack of twenty thousand slaves who were supposed to be hiding in the mountains ready to descend and sack the town.¹¹ Everywhere a mad search was made for *Amis des Noirs*, who were supposed to be arriving in the colony with arms for the slaves.¹² A great fear swept over the island, and anxious petitions were sent to France that the National Assembly declare itself positively against emancipation.¹³ The whites said openly that, if slavery

⁷ See *ante*, p. 18-19. Cf. Raimond, *Véritable Origine*, 6-7.

⁸ Gatereau, *op. cit.*, 24-25. Boré, *Faits relatifs aux Troubles de Saint-Domingue*, * * * (Paris, 1792), 5-6.

⁹ Raimond, *Véritable Origine*, 6-14. Edwards, *op. cit.*, 22. Gatereau, *op. cit.*, 45-48. Garran, *op. cit.*, I. 109-113; II. 10-11. *Journal des États-généraux*, XXV. 382-383, 390.

¹⁰ Moreau de Saint Mery, *Considérations*, 19-20.

¹¹ *Moniteur* (12 janvier 1790), 46. Gatereau, *op. cit.*, 13-14.

¹² *Moniteur* (12 janvier 1790), 46; *ibid.* (6 février 1790), 146. Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Considérations*, 19-20.

¹³ See *ante*, 32. Cf. *Moniteur* (6 février, 1790), 146.

were interfered with, Santo Domingo knew how to imitate the example of the Anglo-American colonies to the north.¹⁴

During this period of confusion, the *Ancien Régime* in Santo Domingo collapsed, as it had done in France, and under pretext of keeping order bands of patriotic troops called "national guards" were formed; but, unlike their prototypes across the sea, these military companies were composed of lawless characters bent on revolution and the destruction of the royal authority. In the Northern Province, Bacon de la Chevalerie, a turbulent nobleman, was elected Captain General of the national guards and, with eighteen *aides-de-camp* following at his heels, he played no inconsiderable rôle.¹⁵ One of his first acts, on assuming office, was to send a company of five hundred men to arrest the Intendant, Barbé-Marbois, at Port-au-Prince; but the Intendant escaped on a frigate,¹⁶ leaving the Government in the nerveless hands of the Comte de Peynier whom nobody feared.

At the same time a movement was under way for the formation of popular assemblies in each of the three provinces. That which met at Cap Français on November 2, 1789,¹⁷ proved the most radical and deserves the most attention. After having elected Bacon de la Chevalerie President and confirmed him in his position as Captain General of the national guards, this assembly declared itself vested with full executive and legislative powers in the Northern Province. It declared its members inviolable and granted them indemnity for past offenses;

¹⁴ Boré, *op. cit.*, 6.

¹⁵ Gaterau, *op. cit.*, 20.

¹⁶ *Moniteur* (12 janvier 1790), 46. Gaterau, *op. cit.*, 13, 15.

¹⁷ *Lettre de l'Assemblée provinciale de la Partie du Nord de Saint-Domingue, à Messieurs des Comités de l'Ouest et du Sud*, * * * (Cap Français, 1790), 32.

it took charge of the public treasury and ordered the acting Intendant to report to it his financial accounts; and through its President, Bacon de la Chevalerie, it controlled the national guards.¹⁸ When Governor Peynier protested against this usurpation of authority, Bacon de la Chevalerie replied that Santo Domingo could not be governed except by her own consent and that the Governor had forfeited his right to be obeyed by his refusal to take the "civic oath." Then the *Conseil Supérieur* interfered on the side of the Governor, and annulled all the decrees of the provincial assembly and forbade it to meddle thereafter in administrative affairs. The assembly replied by restoring the old *Conseil Supérieur* at Cap Français and declaring the members of the *Conseil Supérieur* at Port-au-Prince traitors and public enemies.¹⁹

While this controversy was in progress, a ship touched at Cap Français with dispatches for the Governor. The assembly, suspecting intrigue, opened the packet and discovered a plan for a general colonial assembly, which, as we have noticed, had been drawn up in France by the Massiac Club, the colonial deputies, and the Minister of Marine. With the plan was a private letter to the Governor in which the Minister says: "Although you are not expected to be present at the sessions of this assembly, * * * you can influence, by way of persuasion, the opinions of the members who compose it; and I do not doubt that you can, in this way, prevent or modify any tendency toward violent action."²⁰ Naturally, the discovery of this surreptitious advice added fuel to the flames. These words, wrote the provincial assembly, can only

¹⁸ *Moniteur* (3 mars 1790), 251. Garran, *op. cit.*, I. 80-85.

¹⁹ *Moniteur*, *ibid.* Garran, *op. cit.*, I. 85-88.

²⁰ *Dépêches de M. le Comte de la Luzerne, Ministre de la Marine, aux Administrateurs de Saint-Domingue* (Cap Français, 1789), 4.

mean "seduce, corrupt by promises, false or foul,—yes, intimidate by threats, by the fear of some stroke of authority."²¹ Unanimously and indignantly the plan was rejected, and printed copies of it were distributed to the public, with explanatory comments appended, so that all good patriots might see and understand the perfidy of the agents of despotism.²²

And the example of the provincial assembly at Cap Français was followed, in a modest way, by the two other provincial assemblies. If the colony was to be saved from anarchy, the National Assembly needed to interfere.

Meanwhile the revolutionary spirit had profoundly affected Martinique. On the northwestern coast of this island was the flourishing city of Saint Pierre, the official port of entry for maritime commerce. Here the French merchants had their agents, their warehouses and their banks, and here lived one third the white population of the colony.²³ In the interior of the island were the planters, indebted to and dependent on the merchants for the common necessities of life and irritated because the only outlet for their plantation products was through the port of Saint Pierre.²⁴ On the coast further south was Fort Royal, the seat of the colonial government. Here, since 1787, had been allowed to sit at intervals a colonial assembly composed, however, only of military and civil officials and other nominees of the Governor. The most important act of this assembly had been the imposition of a tax of 33 liv. on each slave kept in the cities, the intention being to force the slaves back to the plantations where they were most

²¹ *Lettre de l'Assemblée provinciale*, 4.

²² *Supra*, note 20.

²³ *Rapport fait à l'Assemblée coloniale de la Guadeloupe, le 10 Novembre 1790, au Nom de la Députation envoyée à la Martinique pour y Etablir la Paix* (Paris, s.d.), 4.

²⁴ Report of Barnave, *Moniteur* (30 novembre 1790), 1381.

needed. The slave owners of Fort Royal paid the tax, but those of Saint Pierre positively refused and the Government failed in its efforts to coerce them.²⁵ Thus there was chronic ill-feeling between Saint Pierre and the planters, on the one hand, and, on the other, bad blood between Saint Pierre and the Government.

When news of the taking of the Bastille reached Saint Pierre and Fort Royal, September, 1789, there was great popular rejoicing. The *petits-blancs* began to wear the tri-colored cockade and their example was imitated by the troops. Vioménil, the Governor *ad interim*, at first made himself popular by giving his sanction to these popular demonstrations; but later, at a public fête, he gave a kiss, or *accolade*, to a mulatto present and ordered the troops to regard the mulattoes thenceforth as their comrades.²⁶ This attempt to obliterate color distinctions aroused great indignation at Fort Royal, where the scene occurred, and race riots ensued. Word was soon passed on to Saint Pierre where a committee was formed for the purpose of forcing the Governor either to embark for France or to summon the colonial assembly. Vioménil, seeing that he had lost control of the situation, chose the latter alternative,²⁷ and thus set the machinery of Révolution in motion.

The assembly of 1787, accordingly, met at Fort Royal; but it declined to put the Governor on trial for treason, as popular clamor demanded, claiming justly that such a question did not fall within its competence. After a few days' session

²⁵ *Rapport fait * * * le 10 Novembre 1790*, 4. Gonyn, P., *Rapport fait à l'Assemblée nationale, sur les Troubles de la Martinique*; * * * (Paris, 1792), 12.

²⁶ Gonyn, *Rapport*, 11. *Moniteur* (6 décembre 1789), 49.

²⁷ Gonyn, *Rapport*, 12. *Rapport fait * * * le 10 Novembre 1790*, 5. Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Considérations*, 18.

it arranged for the election of another assembly, and then dissolved.²⁸

The new assembly, composed of one hundred twenty-one deputies, met at Fort Royal on November 16, 1789. Its avowed purpose was to elect deputies to the National Assembly and to draw up *cahiers* of grievances;²⁹ but this purpose was quickly lost sight of in the controversy which arose between the planters and the merchants. At the first session it was noticed that Saint Pierre had thirty-seven deputies who voted *en bloc*, and that there was a small number of floating votes which were just as likely to be cast with the merchants as with the planters. So the planters could not feel certain of a majority and raised the complaint that Saint Pierre had too many deputies. As a compromise measure, it was proposed that the assembly be divided into a chamber of merchants and a chamber of planters, but this proposal was promptly rejected. Then a motion was made that a new election be held, that five slaves be counted as three citizens, and that a new distribution of seats be made in accordance with the revised census; but this motion was also laid on the table, whereupon forty-two planters walked out of the hall in protest. At this juncture, however, Vioménil interfered as peace-maker and persuaded the recalcitrant planters to return to their seats.³⁰

The assembly now declared itself vested with legislative and administrative powers, but it allowed the Governor, as representing the King, to exercise the right of suspensive veto. Then it proceeded to adopt decrees providing for the formation of national guards and of revolutionary city governments, or "municipalities", and reduced the tax on slaves kept in the

²⁸ Gonyon, *Rapport*, 12. *Rapport fait* * * * le 10 Novembre, 5.

²⁹ Gonyon, *Rapport*, 12.

³⁰ *Rapport fait* * * * le 10 Novembre, 6. Gonyon, *Rapport*, 13.

cities to 25 liv. To these measures Saint Pierre gave a ready assent, but when four ports were declared open to commerce Saint Pierre protested vigorously. In this controversy Vioménil took sides with the planters and gave his approval to all the decrees, but Foulon, the Intendant, took his stand with the merchants and refused to recognize the opening of the ports. Then the assembly, on pretext that unity was necessary to the action of government, declared the office of Intendant abolished as useless and onerous and, foreseeing that trouble would ensue, it authorized the Governor to proclaim martial law throughout the colony. The deputies of Saint Pierre protested that the last decrees were invalid because they had been adopted in the absence of a quorum, but their protest was disregarded. On December 10, after having arranged for the election of a new assembly to meet on February 25, 1790, in which Saint Pierre should have only nineteen deputies out of eighty-one, the assembly dissolved.³¹

Thus at Fort Royal the planters had gained the upper hand, but at Saint Pierre there was great indignation. Hostile demonstrations against the Government greeted the proclamation of martial law and Vioménil, helpless and afraid, summoned the assembly to meet again in extra session. The planters returned willingly enough, but the deputies for Saint Pierre refused to heed the summons. Then the planters, sitting alone, resolved to secede from Saint Pierre and organize a government of their own; but the merchants, to whom the planters owed enormous sums, refused to tolerate secession, and for several months civil war was imminent.³² The National Assembly needed to interfere, therefore, to save Martinique from self-destruction.

³¹ *Rapport fait* * * * *le 10 Novembre, 7-9. Gonyn, Rapport, 14-15.*

³² *Rapport fait* * * * *le 10 Novembre, 9-10. Gonyn, Rapport, 19-25.*

When tidings of these disturbances in the colonies reached Paris, the National Assembly was occupied with the suppression of feudal rights and, as usual, was hard pressed for time. The information regarding the colonies, furnished by the Minister of Marine, on February 25, 1790, was listened to without comment.³³ The gravity of the situation was further emphasized, at the evening session of the same day, by the appearance at the bar of an imposing deputation of armed men calling themselves "the patriotic army of Bordeaux". They denounced the *Amis des Noirs* as dangerous traitors, and petitioned the National Assembly to decree solemnly that there would never be any interference with slavery or the slave trade. The prosperity of the colonies, the commerce of France, agriculture, manufactures—all, they said, depend on the maintenance of slavery and the slave trade.³⁴ Then "the patriotic army" was succeeded at the bar by the deputies extraordinary of commerce and manufactures. The fear that slavery and the slave trade will be interfered with, they said, has wrought havoc in the colonies. Commerce and manufactures are suffering terribly from the evil effects. The financial depression can be relieved only by a decree guaranteeing slavery and the slave trade.³⁵ Still, however, no discussion followed. It was decided to postpone action in the matter until the documents mentioned by the Minister of Marine could be systematized and examined.³⁶

On March 2, the committee on reports, to which had been referred all the documents mentioned by the Minister,³⁷ gave

³³ *Point du Jour*, no. 225, pp. 185-186. *Journal des Débats et des Décrets*, no. 185, pp. 1-2.

³⁴ *Moniteur* (1 mars 1790), 243. *Courier de Provence*, VI. 425.

³⁵ *Moniteur* (1 mars 1790), 243.

³⁶ *Procès-verbal*, no. 212, p. 23.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 213, p. 1; no. 215, p. 13.

a superficial and fragmentary account of the disturbances in both Santo Domingo and Martinique. No deputy, unless perchance he were already well informed on colonial conditions, could have followed the report with more than a glimmer of intelligence; and before it was finished, Alexandre Lameth interrupted with the suggestion that precious time might be saved by the appointment of a committee on colonies to study conditions and recommend a course of action. But to this suggestion Cocherel demurred because, as it would seem, the colonial deputies did not desire a committee on colonies unless they had the assurance that they could control the composition of it. And so, despite the effort to save time, a debate arose over the order of procedure and dragged its weary length along until the President arbitrarily interfered with the demand that the committee on reports be allowed to continue its account. The wishes of the President were complied with, though not without complaint; and when the report was finished, the debate was renewed with warmth and vigor. So many deputies desired to express opinions that each prospective speaker had to inscribe his name upon a list and await his turn. After awhile Lameth's motion was divided into two parts and stated interrogatively: Shall a committee on colonies be appointed? How shall the committee be composed? The discussion of the first division had already begun and thirty-three names had already been inscribed upon the list, when Abbé Maury, a brilliant and fearless debater, proposed that the question of the slave trade be discussed on the next day without reference to a committee. National bankruptcy will be inevitable, he said, unless this question be decided at once. There were many in the hall who thought the Abbé was right, and loud murmurs of approval were heard on all sides; but there were others who saw danger in the consequences and called loudly for Lameth's motion.

Twice the President tried to put Maury's motion to a vote, but each time the confusion was so great that no result could be determined. Eventually the "ayes" and "noes" were taken by roll call and the motion was found to be lost by a narrow margin of 343 to 310.³⁸ If the motion had passed, a debate, fast and furious, might have raged for days and ended with a victory for the *Amis des Noirs*. The defeat of the motion confined the discussion of the slave question within the narrow walls of a committee room where ringing appeals to the rights of man might be expected to meet with less sympathy. Lameth's motion was more in accord with general sentiment, and in consequence, "the National Assembly resolved to establish a committee which shall be charged to examine the petition of the 'patriotic army of Bordeaux' and that of the deputies extraordinary of commerce and manufactures, and to examine the affair of Santo Domingo and that of Martinique; to make a report of everything to the National Assembly and present a draft decree."³⁹

So the committee on colonies had come at last, but the colonial deputies seemed to find little comfort in the thought. Just as the second division of Lameth's motion was about to be put to vote, Cocherel asked that no colonial deputies be appointed on the committee; but his request was disregarded. The National Assembly resolved that the committee should be composed of twelve deputies chosen indiscriminately from the whole body of deputies.⁴⁰ Then the colonial deputies held a secret meeting and resolved among themselves that they would accept no appointment on the committee nor recognize

³⁸ *Point du Jour*, no. 230, p. 261. *Journal des Débats et des Décrets*, no. 190, p. 7. *Procès-verbal*, no. 217, p. 5. *Patriote français*, no. 207, p. 2.

³⁹ *Procès-verbal*, no. 217, p. 5.

⁴⁰ *Procès-verbal*, no. 217, pp. 5-6. *Moniteur* (4 mars 1790), 255.

its existence.⁴¹ They would have none of it, if they could not control its composition.

On March 3, at the close of the morning session, the National Assembly divided into *bureaux*, or sections, as was the rule in the selection of committees,⁴² and selected the members of the committee on colonies. There was little opportunity for intrigue or personal solicitation. The twelve who received the highest number of votes were declared appointed.⁴³

At the morning session of March 4, the result was announced. Some of the members can be identified as having personal or pecuniary interests in the colonies and, having such interests, they naturally sympathized with the views of the white colonists. Others can not be so identified. But in no case had any of them expressed an opinion unfavorable to slavery, the slave trade, or any other institution which the white colonists were interested in preserving. Gerard and Reynaud were colonial deputies from Santo Domingo; Payen de Boisneuf,⁴⁴ Pellerin de la Buxière,⁴⁵ and Alexandre Lameth⁴⁶

⁴¹ *Gazette de Paris* (By de Rozoi, started October 1, 1789), 7 mars 1790.

⁴² Committees were selected in the following manner: The whole body of deputies separated into thirty *bureaux*. When this was done, each deputy received an official ballot upon which he wrote the names of the men for whom he voted. The ballots were then collected in each *bureau*, and each *bureau* made a list of all the names of the men for whom its members had voted, placing opposite the name of each candidate the number of votes which he received in the *bureau*. When all the *bureaux* had voted, the thirty lists were handed in to the Secretaries of the National Assembly, who, in turn, made a single list of all the names of the men for whom votes had been cast, placing opposite the name of each candidate the number of vote which he received. The committee was composed of those who received the highest number of votes. *Règlement à l'Usage de l'Assemblée nationale*, pp. 3, 12.

⁴³ The final count was as follows: Bégouen, 582; Champagny, 382; Thouret, 371; Gerard, 369; Le Chapelier, 331; Garesché, 330; Pellerin de la Buxière, 328; Comte de Reynaud, 309, Alquier, 303; Payen de

were colonial proprietors resident in France. Barnave of Dauphiné had no possessions in the colonies; but he was on intimate terms of friendship with the Lameth brothers—even lived in the house with them⁴⁷—and naturally shared their views on colonial questions. Bégouen and Garesché were wealthy merchants—the one from La Rochelle, the other from Havre—and both were interested in the colonial commerce. Thouret, a lawyer, was deputy from Rouen, a city engaged in the slave trade, and Alquier, a lawyer, was connected with the court of admiralty at La Rochelle, a city also engaged in the slave trade. Nompere de Champagny was an officer of marine, and Le Chapelier was from Rennes.⁴⁸ Thus to the colonial deputies, the committee, after all, seemed to have a benignant aspect. What would be gained if Gerard and Reynaud should refuse to serve as members? Maury and Cazalès, two deputies known to be mischief-makers, would at once take their places and the National Assembly would proceed with its work as if nothing had happened. The situation might be much worse. Accordingly, on March 4, the colonial deputies held another

Boisneuf, 278; Alexandre Lameth 277; Barnave, 272; Abbé Maury, 263; Cazalès, 235; Gaschet de Lisle, 200; de Lachèze, 195; de Bouville, 190; de Saint-Simon, 190; l'Archevêque d'Arles, 187; Fontenay, 183; Durget, 172; de Bressy, 168. Mirabeau also received a small number of votes. Of those selected, Barnave stood lowest in the list. Maury and Cazalès were declared *suppléants*. *Journal de Duquesnoy*, II. 439-440.

⁴⁴ Printed letter of Payen de Boisneuf, beginning with these words: Français, la patrie est en péril (*s.l.n.d.*), 1-2.

⁴⁵ *Liste des Propriétaires de Biens situés dans les Colonies* * * * (Paris, *s.d.*). 37.

⁴⁶ *Oeuvres de Barnave* (Paris, 1843), II. 139. Garran, *op. cit.*, I. 128-129; II. 177.

⁴⁷ In a list of the members of the Jacobin Club published by Aulard (*La Société des Jacobins*, I. xxxvi), Barnave's address was Hotel Lameth, Cul-de-sac Notre-Dame-des-Champs. Cf. *Oeuvres de Barnave*, I. lxxvii.

⁴⁸ *Journal de Duquesnoy*, II. 439.

meeting—in the absence of Cocherel, however,—and agreed among themselves to withdraw their protest concerning the committee and accept the consequences.⁴⁹

The committee began its work doubtless⁵⁰ by selecting its best qualified member to act as reporter and general defender of its policies. As the problem to be dealt with was complicated and as the presentation of a draft decree was expected within four days,⁵¹ the reporter needed to be clever, industrious, enthusiastic—capable of grasping rapidly the threads of a tangled situation. If he were eloquent above ordinary men and, to all outward appearances, disinterested in the issues at stake, so much the better. These qualifications would be a great asset when the report should be presented to the National Assembly. For this important post Barnave was chosen, and till the end of September, 1791, he was the most active and the most conspicuous member of the committee.

At this time Barnave was but twenty-eight years old.⁵² From the very opening of the Estates General he had made a remarkable reputation for himself by his powers as an extempore orator. "He talks," said an observer of these early efforts, "with the fire, the force, the energy of a Demosthenes."⁵³ When the National Assembly divided on the question of the Veto, he took up his position on the Left Center and formed there with Alexandre Lameth and Adrien Duport the cele-

⁴⁹ *Gazette de Paris*, 7 mars 1790.

⁵⁰ The minutes of the committee on colonies are lost. A personal and official search made in the Archives Nationales, during the summer of 1914, failed to uncover them; and a search made by M. Léon Deschamps several years ago in the Ministère des Colonies was also fruitless. Cf. Deschamps, *Les Colonies pendant la Révolution*, xii.

⁵¹ The National Assembly had instructed the committee to present a draft decree on March 8. *Procès-verbal*, no. 217, pp. 5-6.

⁵² *Oeuvres de Barnave*, I. iv.

⁵³ *Journal des États-généraux*, II. 143.

brated "triumvirate" which, more nearly than any other group, controlled the policies of the National Assembly during the year 1790. He spoke quite frequently, but seldom made a solid contribution to the discussion. He usually rose only to speak incidentally or to clarify the points at issue when the debaters became confused. He was apparently a good listener; and his interference at the close of debates frequently resulted in the adoption of important decrees, but it is more likely that he was being led than that he was leading. When he was appointed on the committee on Colonies he was perhaps the most popular orator in the National Assembly, but as a constructive statesman his ability had not been tested. The solution of the colonial problem was to be the test.

The committee had been appointed primarily for the purpose of devising means whereby peace and order could be restored in the colonies; but how to restore order was the question. An appeal to force, the most obvious way, was opposed to the spirit of the Revolution and repulsive to the members of the National Assembly. The alternative was to grant such reforms as the planters desired and the merchants would permit. Accordingly, the colonial deputies appeared before the committee and explained their plans for home rule and for the modification of the navigation laws.⁵⁴ Even the Massiac Club sent notes and documents;⁵⁵ and we may well think that the deputies of commerce and manufactures were not backward in giving advice. As a result, the committee could and did confine its attention wholly to the task of harmonizing the various plans laid before it; and this fact explains how the committee was able, within the remarkable

⁵⁴ Garrañ, *op. cit.*, I. 140-143.

⁵⁵ Deschamps, *op. cit.*, 88-89.

short period of four days, to recommend to the National Assembly a well defined colonial policy.

At the appointed time, March 8, Barnave made his report. Imitating the familiar voice of the planter and the merchant, he declared that the commercial prosperity of France was so intimately bound to her colonial possessions that a great financial panic would follow the loss or abandonment of the colonies. Factories for colonial products would cease operation; great bodies of workmen would be thrown out of employment; flourishing cities would fall into decay; and many commodities, then home products, would have to be imported at great expense from abroad. From the effects of inactivity, the merchant marine would cease to exist, and England would control even the coast trade of France. Many people blinded by despair would sigh for the return of the *Ancien Régime* and join the factions opposed to the Revolution. So it was necessary that the colonies be saved, and salvation could be wrought only by the three following remedies: the abolition of the arbitrary government, the modification of the navigation laws, and the destruction of the propaganda carried on by the *Amis des Noirs*. Therefore he proposed the following as a decree: Each colony shall be permitted to have an assembly elected in conformity with an Instruction which will be drafted by the National Assembly and sent to the colony. This colonial assembly shall be authorized to draft a constitution for the interior régime of the colony and submit the draft to the National Assembly for approval. If the National Assembly should find that the draft of constitution conforms to the general principles which bind the colonies to the mother country, the National Assembly will accept it and submit it to the King for his sanction. That order may be restored in the colonies as quickly as possible, each colonial assembly shall be authorized

to put into execution the decrees of the National Assembly relative to the organization of municipalities and administrative assemblies, and it shall even be authorized to make such changes in these decrees as local conditions may necessitate; but in case of such changes, the execution of the decrees shall be only provisional, pending the ultimate approval of the National Assembly and the sanction of the King. The colonial assembly shall, moreover, be authorized to suggest to the National Assembly what modifications in the navigation laws will be most conducive to colonial happiness and prosperity, and the National Assembly, after having heard the representations of the commercial interests of France in regard to the matter, will decide in its wisdom what modifications shall be made. The constitution of France shall not be applicable to the colonies; and, "besides, the National Assembly does not intend to make innovations, either direct or indirect, in any of the branches of commerce between France and the colonies; it puts the colonists and their property under the special safe-guard of the nation and declares guilty of treason whosoever seeks to foment risings against them."⁵⁶

As may be seen, the adoption of this decree would guarantee the necessary reforms and give the necessary assurances. Arbitrary government would be abolished and home rule granted to the colonists; slavery and the slave trade would be guaranteed, and a prospect be offered for the modification of the navigation laws through mediation. But of course the *Amis des Noirs* and other philanthropists were displeased and desired to oppose the adoption of the decree with all their might. Hardly had Barnave finished than Pétion tried to make his voice heard and Mirabeau, purple with rage, rushed to the

⁵⁶ *Rapport fait à l'Assemblée nationale, le 8 mars 1790, au Nom du Comité des Colonies, par M. Barnave, Député du Dauphiné (Paris, 1790).*

tribune, shouting, "Cowardly knaves that you are"; but loud calls of "question", "question", drowned the voices of the speakers. The decree, as Barnave proposed it, was adopted by acclamation amid vociferous applause.⁵⁷ The colonial deputies were highly pleased with the outcome, and at their instance a corvette was dispatched to the colonies with the glad tidings.

Unhappily for the planters, however, the committee had insisted on appending to the decree an Instruction to guide the colonists in the election of their assemblies and in the drafting of their constitutions; and, what is most important, this Instruction could hardly be drafted without defining in some way the qualifications for active citizenship in the colonies. Now, should the mulattoes be recognized as active citizens? That was the thorny question. On March 14, de Joly led his colored clients before the committee and pleaded for this recognition. A member of the committee has left a record of what happened. "I saw with pain," writes Gerard, "that this plea made a deep impression on the mind of M. Thouret, the president of our committee, as well as upon the majority of the other members. I tried hard, and so did MM. Garesché, Reynaud, Payen de Boisneuf and Pellerin de la Buxière, to make the committee understand how inconvenient it would be, under the circumstances, to give the formal recognition here demanded. We pointed out that, at a time when so many other anxieties torment the colonists, there would be a great danger in giving them a new cause for complaint; that it would be wiser and more seemly to leave to the colonial assemblies the happy privilege of exercising a generosity so well calculated to inspire the mulattoes with sentiments of affection and gratitude,

⁵⁷ *Journal de Duquesnoy*, II. 444. *Moniteur* (9 mars 1790), *Point du Jour*, no. 236, pp. 344-345. *Courier de Provence*, VI. 541-554. *Procès-verbal* no. 223, p. 7.

and to establish the most beautiful harmony among the different classes which compose the colonies."⁵⁸ How much weight this argument had may be inferred from the fact that the committee declined to define the qualifications for active citizenship clearly and without equivocation. The Instruction, as we shall see, contained an ambiguous franchise clause which was vaguely understood to be only temporary in its application.

On March 23, Barnave read the Instruction to the National Assembly. It was drafted expressly for Santo Domingo but provision was made for its application to the other colonies. In substance it ran as follows: Immediately after the official publication of the decree of March 8 and the present Instruction in the colony, "*all persons* aged twenty-five years and upwards, possessing real estate or, in default of such property, domiciled for two years in the parish and paying taxes, shall meet and form the parochial assembly * * * If there does not exist in the colony a colonial assembly previously elected or if the existing assembly voluntarily dissolves, the parochial assembly shall proceed at once to elect deputies to a colonial assembly." But "if, at the time the parochial assembly is formed, there exists in the colony a colonial assembly previously elected and if this assembly does not voluntarily dissolve," then the parochial assembly, instead of electing deputies, shall proceed to vote for the confirmation or dissolution of the existing colonial assembly. The votes of each parish shall be equal in number to that of the deputies which the parish is entitled to have in the colonial assembly. At the end of a fortnight thereafter the Governor shall count the votes of all the parishes and announce the result. A bare majority of votes will determine whether the existing assembly shall continue in session or dissolve. If the vote be for dissolution, the enfranchised citizens shall meet in parochial assemblies for the second time, and elect deputies

to a new colonial assembly in accordance with the provisions of the Instruction.

The colonial assembly, thus elected or confirmed, shall proceed at once to the task of organizing municipalities and administrative assemblies, and of drafting a constitution as provided in the decree of March 8. It shall determine how the colonial legislature shall be composed and how elected; it shall fix the qualifications for active citizenship. But in organizing the executive power, it must provide for a Governor appointed by and responsible to the King; and in organizing the legislative power, it must observe the distinction between the interior régime and the exterior régime of the colony. Laws of a purely local character shall be made in the colony by the colonial legislature and may be executed provisionally with the sanction of the Governor, pending the ultimate approval of the national legislature and the sanction of the King. But laws of the exterior régime—that is, laws pertaining to commerce and military defense—may be proposed, not made, by the colonial legislature, except that in times of dearth laws concerning the introduction of food-stuff may be made by the colonial legislature and provisionally executed with the sanction of the Governor.⁵⁹

As may be seen, the Instruction disfranchised, temporarily at least, the *petits-blancs* and gave the preponderance of political power to the planters. But it did not explicitly disfranchise the mulattoes, and for this reason the colonial deputies were displeased with it. "The colonies," said Reynaud, "owe especial thanks to M. Barnave for having so clearly and so eloquently

⁵⁸ Letter of Gerard to the committee at Les Cayes, Santo Domingo, dated March 15, 1790. Printed in *Correspondance de Julien Raimond, avec ses Frères*, 55-57.

⁵⁹ *Instruction pour les Colonies, Présentée à l'Assemblée nationale, au Nom du Comité chargé de ce Travail, le 23 Mars 1790. Par M. Barnave, Député du Dauphiné (Paris, s. d.).*

made known their importance, and for having expressed so energetically the maternal sentiments of France for her colonies ;” but speaking from his own intimate knowledge of colonial conditions, Reynaud declared that the Instruction would destroy the beneficent effects of the decree of March 8. Then, as a sort of minority report, he proposed another Instruction which skilfully dispensed with all reference to a franchise clause.⁶⁰ But his proposal was rejected. The National Assembly ordered Barnave’s Instruction to be printed and distributed, and postponed the discussion.⁶¹

When the debate was resumed on March 28, the colonial deputies began with one accord to oppose the adoption of the Instruction. “A colonial assembly,” said Cocherel, “is already in session in Santo Domingo; so there is no need to send the Instruction to that colony. This inference is in conformity with your principles. You desire that the colonists make their own constitution, and therefore you should leave them the privilege of electing their own assemblies * * * You have already done enough for the colonies. Go ahead with your own work” and leave the colonies alone.⁶² In reply, Abbé Maury denounced the spirit of independence manifested by the colonists, and criticized the Instruction for leaving the colonies too loosely bound to the mother country. After awhile Abbé Grégoire raised again the vexed question of the mulattoes. “I fear,” said he, “that article IV [the franchise clause of the Instruction] is a little ambiguous in one place; but the colonial deputies tell me that they do not intend to deprive the mulattoes of eligi-

⁶⁰ *Observations de M. le C^{te} de Reynaud, Député de Saint-Domingue, sur quelques Articles du Projet d’Instruction présenté par le Comité colonial des Douze, pour être adressé aux Colonies avec le Décret du 8 Mars* (Paris, 1790).

⁶¹ *Procès-verbal*, no. 238, p. 8.

⁶² *Moniteur* (29 mars 1790), 362.

bility [to active citizenship] and so I yield the floor on condition that they yield on the aristocracy of color." Cocherel: "They did not say that. I protest in the name of my province." Grégoire: "M. Arthur Dillon [deputy for Martinique] told me that such was the intention of the colonial deputation." Cocherel: "M. Arthur Dillon can talk for Martinique as he pleases, but he can not do the honors for Santo Domingo."⁶³ At this point loud calls for the previous question forced Grégoire to discontinue his "indiscreet" remarks. "Article IV satisfies everybody," said Charles Lameth, who possessed vast landed estates in Santo Domingo,⁶⁴ "and as a longer discussion of such an obvious matter may breed doubt and error, I demand that the discussion be confined to the Instruction considered as a whole."⁶⁵ The National Assembly so ordered; and, though several colonists continued to protest, the Instruction was adopted with but slight verbal changes which did not affect the franchise clause.⁶⁶

These two decrees, that of March 8 and the Instruction of March 28, the one the corollary of the other, embody the colonial policy of the National Assembly. If the planters had been long accustomed to self-government, they might have been able eventually to execute the decrees in accordance even with their own interpretation of the franchise clause. Such, indeed, seemed to be the intention of the committee on colonies. There would doubtless have been indignation among the mulattoes, especially among those in France; but it was highly improbable that the rank and file of mulattoes in the colonies would rise in violent protest against disfranchisement, if the planters,

⁶³ *Moniteur* (30 mars 1790), 365.

⁶⁴ *Moniteur* (23 septembre 1790,) 1108.

⁶⁵ *Point du Jour*, no. 257, p. 224. *Patriote français*, no. 233, pp. 2-3.

⁶⁶ *Procès-verbal*, no. 243, pp. 7-8.

with tact and dignity, had advised them to remain quiet; for submission and tranquillity are the salient characteristics of the negro race. But the planters were thoroughly incapable of self-government, lacked dignity and self-possession, and the times were revolutionary. Under the circumstances, no form of popular government, be its parts never so well co-ordinated, could have been successful in restoring peace to the distracted isles. It is not at all surprising that the troubles continued.

CHAPTER III.

DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF SAINT MARC

In the preceding chapter we had occasion to notice that the plan for a general colonial assembly, sent to Santo Domingo by the Minister of Marine, was indignantly rejected by the provincial assembly at Cap Français;¹ and this behavior was imitated by the other two provincial assemblies. Nevertheless, all three provincial assemblies deemed the convocation of a general assembly advisable and, adopting a plan proposed by the provincial assembly at Port-au-Prince, they issued a call for the election of a general assembly to meet at Saint-Marc, away from the influence of the Government.² To meet at Léogane, the place indicated in the ministerial plan, was to meet, says a letter, "in a city where the pestilential miasmas of a dastardly, perverse, malicious Administration, the enemy of our repose, our fortunes and our lives, would soon make our deputies so many victims of its resentment and tyranny."³

This plan of convocation provided that the deputies should be elected directly by primary assemblies in the parishes and that all tax-payers domiciled in a parish for one year should have the right to vote.⁴ But the elections were not undisturbed. Candidates for each parish were nominated by the provincial

¹ See *ante*, p. 39.

² *Adresse prononcée à l'Assemblée nationale, * * * par les Députés des Paroisses du Port-au-Prince et de la Croix-des-Bouquets* (Paris, 1790), 4. Garran, *op. cit.*, I. 94-95.

³ *Lettre de l'Assemblée provinciale de la Partie du Nord de St.-Domingue, à Messieurs des Comités de l'Ouest et du Sud, **** (s. l., 1790), 32.

⁴ Garran, *op. cit.*, I. 94-95.

assemblies, and if any opposition appeared it was suppressed by force.⁵ When the elections were over, the provincial assembly at Port-au-Prince and that at Les Cayes dissolved for the simple reason that nearly all the men who sat in these assemblies were elected to the general assembly at Saint Marc. The other provincial assembly did not dissolve, but its character completely changed: nearly all the planter deputies secured their election to the general assembly, while the merchant deputies and the lawyer deputies continued to sit at Cap Français as the assembly of the Northern Province.⁶ Consequently there were now in Santo Domingo two popular assemblies, the one at Saint Marc and the other at Cap Français. The former was dominated by planters who sought to escape their financial obligations to the French merchants by declaring the colony independent of all outside authority save that of the powerless King;⁷ the latter was dominated by merchants and lawyers who conceived an ardent admiration for "the sublime decrees of the National Assembly" and deprecated any tendency toward secession from France. And, of course, between two assemblies so composed, peace and amity could not long prevail.

⁵ Gatereau, *op. cit.*, 41-42.

⁶ *Discours prononcé à l'Assemblée nationale, le 2 Octobre 1790, au Nom de l'Assemblée générale de la Partie française de Saint-Domingue* (Paris, s.d.), 10-12. *Relation authentique de tout ce qui s'est passé à Saint-Domingue* * * * (s.l.n.d.), 4.

⁷ Il été fait un résumé très-exact des sommes dues au commerce de France, par des membres qui composent l'assemblée de Saint Marc: il s'élève à 68 millions. (44 millions environ, argent de France). La plupart de ces debiteurs voudraient se soustraire à leurs créanciers; ils ne le peuvent qu'en rendant la colonie indépendante.—News item in the *Moniteur* (12 septembre 1790), 1053 Cf. Boré, *op. cit.*, 5. Raimond, *Lettre d'un Citoyen*, * * * au Citoyen C. B* *, 5. Statement of Grégoire to the National Assembly, *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XXV. 385-386.

The assembly of Saint Marc opened its first session on April 14, 1790, with great pomp and ceremony. It adopted officially the title, *Assemblée Générale de la Partie française de Saint-Domingue*, and placed on a curtain in the hall the motto, *Saint-Domingue, la Loi et le Roi; notre Union fait notre Force*.⁸ Arrogating to itself the supreme powers of a constituent assembly, it declared its members inviolable, summoned to the bar recalcitrant military officers, appointed a committee for the investigation of treason and crime, intercepted letters sent by the Minister of Marine to colonial officials, assumed charge of the public moneys, invited the Governor to appear at the bar and explain his views, and ordered him to send back to France a body of recruits recently arrived and to admit no more recruits unless so advised by the general assembly.⁹ Upon this usurpation of sovereign authority the provincial assembly appears to have looked with increasing envy, anger and alarm. When the decree of March 8 reached Cap Français, the provincial assembly sent it in all haste to Saint Marc, where it arrived on April 26. But the general assembly scarcely faltered in its independent course. On May 14, it adopted decrees for the formation of municipalities and the reorganization of the courts of justice, and sent the decrees, before they had been sanctioned by the Governor, to the appropriate officials for execution.¹⁰ The provincial assembly forbade officials in the Northern Province to execute the decrees, and sent a formal protest to the general assembly, on May 17, that it was violating constitu-

⁸ Note the omission of *coloniale* from the title and *nation* from the motto.

⁹ *Adresse prononcée * * * par les Députés des Paroisses*, 4-7. Barnave, *Rapport sur les Affaires de Saint-Domingue*, * * * les 11 & 12 Octobre, 1790 (Paris, 1790), 6.

¹⁰ Barnave, *Rapport* (October, 1790), 6-7.

tional law.¹¹ In reply, the general assembly issued its famous "Constitutional Bases" of May 28, wherein it defined what it understood to be the bounds of its authority in the colony and what it understood to be the relations between the colony and France. The "Bases" declared that all the laws of the interior régime shall be made in the colony and that only the sanction of the King shall be necessary to make them entirely valid; that pending the royal sanction all such laws shall be only notified to the Governor and by him provisionally executed; that the laws of the exterior régime "shall not be enforced in the colony until the colonial legislature shall have given its consent thereto;" that in cases of urgent necessity, of which the colonial legislature shall be the judge, the introduction of food-stuff from foreign markets shall not be a breach of the navigation laws; and that the "Constitutional Bases" shall be immediately transmitted to France for the *acceptation*¹² of the King and the National Assembly.¹³

Three days after the adoption of the "Bases", the general assembly received officially the decree of March 8 and the Instruction. On June 1, it discussed the two decrees and resolved to obey them in so far as they did not violate the rights of Santo Domingo, as those rights had been defined in the "Bases". That it should, in accordance with the provisions of the Instruction, submit its confirmation to a vote of the parishes, it complained, was an unnecessary hardship—a step which the National Assembly had refused to take in France; yet, in order to show that its cause was righteous, it resolved to call

¹¹ *Adresse de l'Assemblée provinciale de la Partie du Nord de Saint-Domingue, à l'Assemblée nationale* (Paris, 1790), 1-5.

¹² *Acceptation*, as used in decrees at that time, precluded the possibility of a refusal.

¹³ Barnave, *Rapport* (October, 1790), 18-22. Document quoted *in extenso*.

together the citizens of the different parishes and ask them to vote for its confirmation or dissolution. But it showed its independence by ordering that the elections be conducted in accordance with the regulations by which the general assembly had been first elected and not in accordance with the regulations prescribed by the Instruction.¹⁴

An exciting campaign followed. The general assembly sent out orators to advocate its cause in the parishes;¹⁵ it distributed three thousand copies of a pamphlet which explained that the "Constitutional Bases" did not contravene the decree of March 8; and it published a letter from Gouy d'Arsy, which said: "We suspect the Minister of Marine, our common enemy, of guilty maneuvers in this regard * * * I think that when this Instruction reaches you the colonial assembly will have acquired a force, a superiority, an influence which will enable you, in accordance with the spirit of the decree of March 8, to accept in this Instruction of March 28 only those articles which can be, without danger, adapted to the local conditions in the colony."¹⁶ On the other hand, the provincial assembly, when advised of the course of events, ordered the emissaries of the general assembly to leave the Northern Province within forty-eight hours, and issued a call for a counter election in strict accordance with the regulations prescribed by the Instruction.¹⁷ It also sent out orators, letters and pamphlets to explain the irregular conduct of the general assembly.¹⁸ In

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹⁵ *Adresse de l'Assemblée provinciale*, 6-7. *Adresse * * * par les Députés des Paroisses*, 12-13.

¹⁶ *Extrait d'une Lettre privée, écrite le 30 Mars 1790*, p. 3. *Moniteur* (12 août 1790), 923. Barnave, *Rapport* (October, 1790), 26-27.

¹⁷ *Adresse de l'Assemblée provinciale*, 6-9. *Adresse * * * par les Députés des Paroisses*, 12-13.

¹⁸ *Relation authentique*, 5.

some places there were riots and bloodshed.¹⁹ On the one hand, the *petits-blancs* whom the Instruction disfranchised supported the cause of the general assembly with guns, swords and clubs.²⁰ On the other, the opponents of the general assembly organized at Port-au-Prince, where the contest was hottest, a band of armed volunteers who took an oath to defend the decrees of the National Assembly against all transgressors.²¹

In the midst of this confusion the voting took place. When the polls were closed, the general assembly claimed a great victory. It ordered that a *Te Deum* be chanted in all the cities and villages, and ordained that an annual fête be observed on July 14 in commemoration of "the triumph of the friends of the public weal over the enemies of Santo Domingo."²² And, on July 13, the weak and vacillating Governor, to the great annoyance of the defeated faction, announced officially that the general assembly had indeed been confirmed.²³ Then the defeated faction cried fraud and refused to abide by the decision.

Thus confirmed the general assembly became more arrogant than ever before. Without the Governor's approval, it threw open the ports to foreign trade under the supervision of its own creatures, the municipalities; it ordered the colonial deputies at Paris to suspend their functions until the question of a colonial representation in the National Assembly had been determined; by its orders the powder magazine at Léogane was seized and appropriated to the "patriotic" cause; and, on July 27, it issued a decree that all the regular troops in the colony

¹⁹ *Adresse de l'Assemblée provinciale*, 7-8.

²⁰ *Discours prononcé * * * par les Députés de l'Assemblée provinciale * * * le 25 Novembre 1790* (Paris, 1790), 7-8.

²¹ *Adresse * * * par les Députés des Paroisses*, 14-15.

²² Barnave, *Rapport* (October, 1790), 30.

²³ *Ibid.*, 29, 38-39. *Adresse * * * par les Députés des Paroisses*, 16.

must disband, and then it issued a call straightway for volunteers to enlist in the "patriotic army", promising high pay and land allotments at the end of a short term of service.²⁴ The last measure was clearly an attempt to create defection among the regular troops, and the supine Governor was at length aroused to action. On July 29, he declared by proclamation that the general assembly and its adherents were traitors to the nation and the King, and that he would in consequence hurl against them all the military forces at his command to the end that the general assembly be dissolved and utterly dispersed.²⁵ And suiting the action to the word, he sent troops toward Saint Marc from the south and east; and at the same time the Lieutenant General of the Northern Province, at the bidding of the provincial assembly, co-operated with an army from the north. Seeing the chain of bayonets rapidly closing around them, a majority of the general assembly slipped away before the blockade was complete;²⁶ but the minority stood their ground and issued a call to their adherents for armed support. "*Union, célérité et courage*," ran the appeal; "the rallying points are Saint Marc, Cul-de-Sac and Léogane." But no blood was shed. The battleship *Léopard*, the crew of which had mutinied and driven the commander ashore at Port-au-Prince, touched at Saint Marc and, on August 8, sailed away with eighty-five— all that remained of the general assembly—on board.²⁷ Then a momentary calm succeeded: each faction was awaiting the judgment of the National Assembly.

²⁴ Barnave, *Rapport* (October, 1790), 40-45. *Adresse de l'Assemblée provinciale*, 10. *Patriote français*, no. 372, p. 4.

²⁵ Barnave, *Rapport* (October, 1790), 57-58.

²⁶ *Moniteur* (5 novembre 1790), 1277.

²⁷ Barnave, *Rapport* (October, 1790), 61-81. Documents quoted in *extenso*. *Moniteur* (23 septembre 1790), 1099.

At Paris the National Assembly had intimations from time to time that factional strife was raging in Santo Domingo, but for several weeks no report was made on the affair. The "Constitutional Bases" arrived in July and with the document was a letter from the general assembly, demanding that the "Bases" be ratified by the National Assembly and accepted by the King; but without being publicly read these documents were referred to the committee on colonies.²⁸ Other documents bearing on the disturbances—sometimes twenty-five in one packet²⁹—kept coming in, and were disposed of in the same way. At length, on September 4, Gouy d'Arsy read a long address from the provincial assembly at Cap Français, which gave for the first time a consecutive account of the disturbances down to the confirmation of the general assembly. Though decidedly partisan, this address throws a flood of light upon the sources of discontent in the colony, and for that reason long extracts from it deserve to be quoted:

"What then determined the general assembly to adopt measures which we deem unconstitutional and impracticable? The general assembly has hesitated to tell you. Then it is our duty to tell you frankly, however painful the truth may be. It is a lack of confidence in the National Assembly itself. You see proof of this in the "Constitutional Bases" of May 28 and in the resolutions taken on June 1 * * * This lack of confidence is due, in the first place, to the *Amis des Noirs*—to the certain knowledge that *Amis des Noirs* are members of the National Assembly and form there a strong party. They and the frightful antagonist of the slave trade³⁰ do not consider

²⁸ *Moniteur* (1 août 1790), 877. *Procès-verbal*, no. 364, p. 8. *Gazette de Paris*, 2 août 1790.

²⁹ *Procès-verbal*, no 388, p. 1.

³⁰ Brissot de Warville?

themselves beaten and persecute us continually. In the second place, this lack of confidence is due to the welcome which the mulattoes received from the National Assembly,³¹ to the infamous pamphlet of the Abbé Grégoire,³² to his motion in their favor on March 28, and to indiscreet newspapers which declare that this motion was rejected only because the Abbé was assured that article IV of the Instruction did confer the rights of active citizenship on the mulattoes. Finally, this lack of confidence is due to the belief that the French merchants exert an excessive influence over the National Assembly to uphold the navigation laws.

"Those who have fomented this distrust have cited as evidence the long neglect of the National Assembly to notice the colonies, the indifference of the National Assembly when it was informed of slave insurrections in Martinique and Santo Domingo,³³ the loud disapproval shouted by the members of the National Assembly when the secession of Santo Domingo in favor of some rival power was hinted at,³⁴ and the readiness with which the National Assembly attended to the terrors and representations of the maritime and manufacturing cities and to the murmurs of the people of Paris against a slaveholding aristocracy. These maligners have even misinterpreted your motive in granting the decree of March 8 and in refusing to allow it to be discussed. They call it a decree begotten of fear and deceitful cunning. They have called attention to the reticence of the decree and the Instruction in regard to our movable property [slaves]—a reticence maintained despite

³¹ On October 22, 1789.

³² *Mémoire en Faveur des Gens de Couleur ou Sang-Mêlés de Saint-Domingue* (Paris, 1789).

³³ On December 1 and 3, 1789, the National Assembly was informed of these insurrections.

³⁴ By the Comte de Reynaud in the session of March 23, 1790.

the insistent demands of the colonial deputies. They have called attention to that generic term *citizens* in article XI of the decree and to the expression *all persons* in article IV of the Instruction, of which the mulattoes may take advantage * * *

The fault of the general assembly is that it could not banish, in regard to these things, the apprehensions common to the colony. Our only merit is that we believed all the time that your decrees furnish sufficient guarantees in this regard, that the august representatives of the most loyal nation on earth could not possibly set a snare for their brothers. If we had not believed these things, we should certainly have proposed, as the general assembly has done, constitutional measures inadmissible by you. But before we propose a constitution to you, we are going to ask you for a guarantee more formal and more explicit * * *. But above all things, will the colony never sacrifice an indispensable prejudice in regard to the mulattoes. It will protect them, it will ameliorate their lot; it gives them proof of this intention every day, and time will doubtless afford more extensive opportunities. But the colony ought to be, the colony shall be the sole judge, the absolute master of the time and the means. What has passed in Santo Domingo recently, what is now passing in Martinique, proves more conclusively than ever before the absolute necessity of this. It is perhaps only too true that the liberal interpretation given to article IV of your Instruction and the welcome accorded the mulattoes by the National Assembly have inflated the pride of the mulattoes and put the colonies in peril. It is necessary that the mulattoes know that it is only from us that they can expect benefits, and that they are to obtain these benefits only by wise behavior and respectful bearing.

"As to the slaves, our self-interest is allied to their well-being; but the colony will not suffer that this sort of property which it holds legally and upon which all other property is dependent, be put in jeopardy either now or in the future.

"The colony can easily reach an agreement with the French commercial interests. The merchants ought to feel that it is to their interest to encourage our agriculture and to increase the amount of our marketable products; and we, on our side, feel that we ought to contribute to the prosperity of the state by giving the greatest scope possible to national commerce.

"But so long as the colony entertains apprehensions in regard to slavery and the enfranchisement of the mulattoes—questions which are purely domestic and do not in any way injure France—it will never enjoy that tranquillity so necessary to the prosperity of the kingdom and the reciprocal bonds of union * * *. We have all confidence in you; but who will answer for future legislation? Render succeeding legislatures incapable of listening to the enemies of our repose. Grant in advance to the colony, as an inalterable article of the French constitution, that no laws concerning the interior régime, and notably concerning the status of the different classes of inhabitants which compose the colony, shall ever be made except upon the precise and formal demand of the colony itself; that no laws concerning the exterior régime shall ever be made without having been discussed by the colony if they be proposed by the French merchants, and none made without having been discussed by the French merchants if they be proposed by the colony. In regard to the introduction of food-stuff in cases of urgent necessity, protect us from the caprice and seduction of the Governor.

"Then the colony will be tranquil forever. Then those who distrust the National Assembly will no longer have a

pretext for distrust. Then, but not till then, will our bonds of friendship be unbreakable."³⁵

This was indeed a stinging, though veiled, criticism of the National Assembly and, when Gouy d'Arsy had left off reading, loud murmurs of disapproval were heard in the hall; but Barnave stoutly defended the provincial assembly, saying that it deserved praise and not blame for its frank and exemplary conduct, that it had shown all along a constant attachment to the mother country and the greatest devotion to the constitution, and that the majority of its demands might with propriety be granted.³⁶ Thus this colonial faction, which in spirit was not one whit less rebellious than the other, found favor in the sight of the committee on colonies simply because it had, with its lips at least, acknowledged the paramount authority of the National Assembly. The other faction, for failing to do just this, was to be dealt with quite differently.

On September 14, the Eighty-five on board the *Léopard* arrived at Brest and, posing as fugitives from ministerial despotism, they received a warm welcome from the municipality and the local national guard. They held a public meeting on shore and agreed to meet again at Paris on October 5. Then they dispersed to Nantes and other commercial centers to solicit loans from their merchant friends.³⁷ But, unfortunately for themselves, their arrival at Brest was the occasion of a mutiny on board the battleship *La Ferme* stationed in the harbor. As soon as the National Assembly was apprised of the disturbance, it issued orders for the suppression of the mutiny and for the discharge of the *Léopard's* crew, and summoned the Eighty-five, suspected of being the instigators of the mischief, to the bar to answer for their conduct.³⁸ So the

³⁶ *Adresse de l'Assemblée provinciale*, 11-18.

fugitives from ministerial oppression, who had crossed the seas as accusers, now found themselves accused.

While these orders of the National Assembly were being put into execution, five delegates from the parishes of Port-au-Prince and Croix-des-Bouquets appeared at Paris and entertained the National Assembly with the second account of the irregular conduct of the general assembly.³⁹ At the close of their address, the President responded that the National Assembly appreciated the presence of good patriots and invited them to remain in the hall as honored guests. Then Barnave said: "You have just heard the story of the disturbance in Santo Domingo. It is high time to restore order in that colony. Yet as the majority of the members of the general assembly are now in Paris, I think it but just that the National Assembly hear what they have to say for themselves before it takes action. Already they have written to the President requesting that they be heard at the bar. It is quite important to hear them without delay, because there are no intrigues and maneuvers which they do not employ to lead public opinion astray. While I am now speaking, writings are being circulated with this intent. Let them come forward and exonerate themselves. Let them not thus follow obscure and devious ways. Let them defend themselves in the presence of the nation: it is ready to hear them. I make the motion that they be heard on Saturday evening (October 2) and that the report of the committee on colonies be made on the following Monday morning."⁴⁰

³⁹ *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XV. 227. *Moniteur* (5 septembre 1790), 1025.

⁴⁰ *Moniteur* (29 septembre 1790), 1127.

³⁸ *Ibid.* (22 septembre 1790), 1097. *Procès-verbal*, no. 417, pp. 23-26.

³⁹ *Adresse * * * par les Députés des Paroisses*, etc.

⁴⁰ *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XVI. 160.

This motion was adopted, and at the appointed time representatives of the Eighty-five appeared at the bar. In their address, they explained that the faction hostile to them was composed only of agents of the executive power who "trembled to see the dawn of liberty," of a few persons attached to the law courts who saw their means of livelihood destroyed by the reorganization of the judiciary system, and of merchants who had little interest in the agricultural development of the colony. They did not deny the specific charges brought against them by their opponents. They admitted that the general assembly had reformed the law courts, organized municipalities, summoned officials to the bar, opened letters addressed to the Governor, and thrown open the ports to foreign trade; but they claimed that such conduct was demanded by the exigencies of the time and moreover permitted by the decree of March 8. They entertained no thought, they said, of secession from France: their only purpose was to shake off the tyranny of the Governor. Having failed in the effort, they had fled for refuge to France. Then they rested their case on three contentions: that they had been freely and regularly elected by their fellow citizens, that their conduct by a second test had been approved by their fellow citizens, and that they had conformed to the spirit of the decree of March 8 and the Instruction. In conclusion, they demanded a special committee to investigate their conduct, and asked that they themselves might have representatives on this committee.⁴¹

On the whole, this address was more humble in tone than that of the provincial assembly read by Gouy d'Arisy. Even the last demand of the Eighty-five was not at all preposterous

⁴¹ *Discours prononcé à l'Assemblée nationale, le 2 Octobre 1790, au Nom de l'Assemblée générale de la Partie française de Saint-Domingue* (Paris, 1790).

in view of the fact that Barnave, as representing the committee on colonies, seemed prejudiced against them. But this demand was completely ignored. Barnave simply directed that their address and whatever other documents they wished to submit as evidence in their case be left at the Secretary's desk: culprits were not to dictate to the National Assembly the manner of their trial. To this offensive treatment the Eighty-five demurred for a time, but eventually, in an ugly mood, agreed to submit their archives to the committee on colonies as soon as the documents could be systematized.⁴²

And yet they made no haste to submit their documents. In order to give them ample time, the report of the committee was postponed for another week. But for this act of grace they showed no disposition to be grateful. "It is important for France and for us, too," they wrote to the National Assembly on October 4, when they ascertained that no report of the committee was forthcoming, "that you examine our credentials at once. We assure you that we are indeed the general assembly of Santo Domingo and being so we have a right to complain of the decree which offended our dignity by summoning us to the bar. We keep silent about the reception which you gave us. We feel all the elevation of our character. We will prove to you that our decrees are constitutional, that they are in accord with your Instruction."⁴³ Murmurs of disapproval greeted the reading of this letter, and Barnave said indignantly: "They say that they have official records, but not a record has been submitted to us. They agreed to leave at the Secretary's desk a copy of their

⁴² *Journal des États-généraux*, XVI. 211-212. *Procès-verbal*, no. 429, pp. 19-20.

⁴³ *Moniteur* (5 octobre 1790), 1155. *Journal des États-généraux*, XVI. 223.

address delivered at the bar, but we have received no copy. We can not afford to dally too long with men who are suspected, with too much reason, of creating disturbances in Santo Domingo and at Brest. I move that, if the documents which they promised are not submitted within forty-eight hours, the report on the affair be made without further delay."⁴⁴ And the motion was adopted.

Accordingly, on October 11, without waiting longer for the promised documents, Barnave began the report on the affair of Santo Domingo. He gave an account of all the troubles in the colony from the beginning of the Revolution down to the flight of the Eighty-five on August 8. He quoted *in extenso* a number of authenticated documents in support of a list of serious charges against the general assembly. Only a sovereign body, he said, could give orders, as the general assembly did, to the administrator of the colonial finances or summon to the bar civil and military officials; only a sovereign body could intercept official correspondence or interfere with the enforcement of the navigation laws; only a sovereign body could execute decrees without the sanction of the Governor or adopt an instrument like the "Constitutional Bases" which reduced the relations between the colony and France to the simple terms of a commercial treaty. Therefore, by its arrogance and presumption, he said, the general assembly has compassed its own destruction.

Turning then to the demands made by the provincial assembly of Cap Français in its address of September 4, he explained that the time had not come to deal with the question of the navigation laws or the introduction of food-stuff without the approval of the Governor; but, said he, the provincial assembly "has asked for an inalterable constitutional article

⁴⁴ *Moniteur* (5 octobre 1790), 1158.

which shall provide that no law concerning the interior régime, and notably concerning the status of persons, be made for the colony except upon the precise and formal demand of the colonial assemblies * * * We think that you should not refuse to re-state and explain, in the clearest and most formal manner possible, the intentions which you have *already expressed in this regard*. We have therefore inserted in the preamble of the draft decree which we are going to present to you a phrase wherein the demand of the provincial assembly relative to the laws upon the status of persons is graciously complied with.”⁴⁵ This method of procedure is more seemly, he continued, than to recommend an isolated decree upon the status of persons.

At length, after six hours of reading and explaining, Barnave presented the draft decree. The main features of it are as follows: The National Assembly, “considering that constitutional law has been violated and public tranquillity disturbed by the general assembly sitting at Saint Marc; that this assembly has provoked and justly incurred its own dissolution: considering that the National Assembly has promised to the colonies the establishment of laws best fitted to insure their happiness and prosperity; that it has, in order to allay colonial apprehensions, promised in advance to listen to the recommendations of the colonies concerning all modifications which may be made in the navigation laws and promised in advance to decree, as a constitutional article in their organization, *that no law upon the status of persons shall ever be made for the colonies except upon the precise and formal demand of the colonial assemblies* * * * declares that the pretended decrees and other acts of the assembly constituted at Saint Marc under the title of *Assemblée Générale*

⁴⁵ Barnave, *Rapport* (October, 1790), 96-97.

de la Partie française de Saint-Domingue infringe the national sovereignty and are therefore nul and their execution prohibited; declares the said assembly deprived of its powers and its members divested of the character of deputies to the colonial assembly of Santo Domingo; declares that the assembly of the Northern Province, the citizens of Cap Français, the citizens of Port-au-Prince, Croix-des-Bouquets and all the other parishes, who remained steadfastly attached to the National Assembly * * * have generously fulfilled all the duties incumbent upon French citizens and are hereby thanked by the National Assembly in the name of the nation;" and the National Assembly decrees that a new colonial assembly shall be elected in accordance with the regulations prescribed by the Instruction, that the old laws shall be enforced in the colony until the new régime is established, that two battleships be sent to the West Indies to preserve order, and that the Eighty-five be placed under arrest to await the further pleasure of the National Assembly.⁴⁶

As may be seen, this decree restored the *status quo ante* in Santo Domingo and made provisions for the restoration of order. To these features of the decree, none, save partisans of the general assembly,⁴⁷ could have been opposed; but to the

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 100-103. The Eighty-five were not placed in close confinement, but were not allowed to leave France without permission.

⁴⁷ Cocherel was so annoyed at the treatment of the Eighty-five that he offered to resign his seat, but the National Assembly refused to consider his resignation on the condition which he named (*Gazette de Paris*, 16 octobre 1790. *Procès-verbal*, no. 489, p. 1.). His name disappears from the records of the debates after October 12, 1790. Gerard, member of the committee on colonies, expressed his disapproval of the recognition given by the National Assembly to the provincial assembly of Cap Français (*Moniteur*, 27 novembre 1790, pp. 1366-1367), but he did not resign his seat. This behavior of the two colonial deputies may be explained by the fact that they had been appointed by the general assembly as its special agents to see to it that the "Constitutional Bases" should

phrase in the preamble relative to the "status of persons", which pretended that a debatable question had already been decided, there was strong opposition. No sooner had Barnave finished the report than Pétion, Grégoire and Mirabeau rushed to the tribune; but they were not allowed to speak. A motion to postpone the discussion was rejected. There was a loud call for the question, and this decree of October 12, like that of March 8, was adopted by acclamation without discussion.⁴⁸ "The National Assembly did not wish to hear anyone," writes a discreet journalist, "because those who demanded the floor had already expressed themselves as favorable to the negroes."⁴⁹

Thus had the first attempt at popular government in Santo Domingo proved a fiasco. The general assembly indeed stood on historical ground when it refused to recognize any other sovereign authority than that of the King, but it lost all claim to consistency when it undertook to make servants of the King's officials. The National Assembly dissolved the general assembly because the latter refused to recognize the paramount authority of the former; but the Abbé Grégoire spoke at least a partial truth when he said: "If you will follow the dispositions of the decree of October 12, you will see that the colonial assembly of Santo Domingo was sacrificed to the terrors of French commerce."⁵⁰

be accepted by the National Assembly and the King. Letter of the Massiac Club to the provincial assembly, dated June 16, 1791. Arch. Nat. Dxxv. 87. See also Papers of the Massiac Club for July 25-31, 1790. Arch. Nat., Dxxv. 86.

⁴⁸ *Moniteur* (13 octobre 1790), 1188. *Procès-verbal*, no. 439, pp. 9-10.

⁴⁹ *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XVI. 359.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, XXV. 386.

CHAPTER IV.

THE NEW INSTRUCTION

In a previous chapter we left two hostile factions facing each other in Martinique, at the end of the year 1789, and threatening to engage in armed conflict.¹ The colonial assembly, which was dominated by planters, had arranged for the election of a new colonial assembly to meet at Fort Royal on February 25, 1790; and when the elections took place the relations between the factions were strained to the breaking point. The city of Saint Pierre and the two adjacent parishes not only refused to send deputies to the new assembly but almost precipitated war by calling in armed reinforcements from the neighboring islands. Vioménil, on the other hand, at the head of the planter faction, began to muster what troops he could, both white and colored, and was threatening to lay siege to Saint Pierre when, on March 26, he was relieved of his command by Damas, the regular Governor of the colony. Saint Pierre hastened then to send a deputation to Governor Damas, and some sort of a truce seems to have been arranged.²

In the meanwhile the colonial assembly had been endeavoring to hold its sessions at Fort Royal; but the arrival of the deputies was slow. Out of a possible eighty-one, only twenty-five were present at the opening session on February 25, and on March 18 only thirty could be counted. Of the twenty-seven

¹ See *ante*, p. 42.

² *Moniteur* (17 juin 1790), 685. *Journal des Etats-généraux*, X. 465. *Procès-verbal*, no. 269, pp. 27-28. Gonyon, *Rapport*, 25-26. *Rapport fait*
* * * le 10 Novembre, 11-12.

parishes into which the colony was divided, only fifteen or sixteen had any deputies at all.³ Nevertheless the assembly proceeded to business and sent to Arthur Dillon and Moreau de Saint-Méry the following instructions: "The deputies for Martinique in the National Assembly shall demand that the colony enjoy, under the direct sanction of the King, the absolute right to make all laws of the interior régime, notably those relative to slaves and mulattoes * * * In France there are only citizens; in the colonies there are masters, freedmen and slaves. Conditions being different, the colonies should then have special laws. Laws are of three kinds: general laws relative to military defense, which the colony should receive from the mother country; special laws which the colony should make for itself; and the navigation laws, which should be agreed to by both the colony and the mother country * * * The landed proprietor is the only true citizen, the only one who should have the right to take part in public affairs."⁴

On April 17, the decree of March 8 arrived unofficially in the colony⁵ and shortly afterwards the assembly, taking advantage of the lull occasioned by the return of Governor Damas to office, proposed that Saint Pierre send its quota of nineteen deputies to Fort Royal and assist in the execution of the decree; but Saint Pierre refused to send deputies on the ground that the assembly was irregular, unconstitutional and disavowed by the majority of the colonists, and that it had been guilty under Vioménil of arming mulattoes against the whites.⁶

On May 28, the assembly discussed the decree of March 8 and the Instruction, which had just arrived officially, and on

³ Gonyn, *Rapport*, 28. *Rapport fait* * * * le 10 Novembre, 11.

⁴ Gonyn, *Rapport*, 29-30.

⁵ *Moniteur*, (17 juin 1790), 685.

⁶ *Rapport fait* * * * le 10 Novembre, 13.

June 1, it was decided to submit the question of the confirmation or dissolution of the assembly to a vote of the parishes. A call was, in consequence, issued at once for an election, and Saint Pierre took occasion to answer with a hostile demonstration. On June 3, Corpus Christi Day, several regiments of mulattoes undertook to march, as the white troops were doing, in a procession through the streets of the city; but suddenly the tocsin rang out, there was a cry "To arms", and a race riot ensued between the *petits-blancs* and the mulattoes. Two or three whites were killed, and fourteen mulattoes shot, stabbed or hanged. One hundred twenty-six mulattoes were thrown into prison and a howling mob gathered outside the jail threatening to break in and murder them all. Thereupon the municipality of Saint Pierre hastened to form a special court called the *Chambre prévôtale* to try the prisoners and mete out speedy justice. But the assembly very soon heard of the "massacre" of the mulattoes and of the impending fate of the prisoners, and on June 7 it requested Governor Damas to restore order in Saint Pierre and punish the guilty. On June 9, the Governor laid siege to the city by land and sea and effected its capture without the shedding of blood. Some two hundred persons suspected of implication in the "massacre" were sent to Fort Royal for trial and scores of others were ordered to proceed thither to serve as witnesses in the affair. The national guard of the city was disbanded, the municipality was suspended, the old city government was restored, and a garrison was left in the city to overawe the recalcitrant.⁷ Thus at a blow the planters had won supremacy over their political rivals.

⁷ *Rapport fait * * * le 10 Novembre*, 15-18. Gonyn, *Rapport*, 41-45. *Journal des Etats-généraux* XIV. 158-159. *Procès-verbal*, no. 368, p. 13. *Courier de Provence*, XI. 485-496. *Moniteur* (5 août 1790), 893; *ibid.* (10 août 1790), 915; *ibid.* (16 août 1790), 941; *ibid.* (19 octobre 1790), 1209; *ibid.* (30 novembre 1790), 1381.

During these days of disturbance, the elections were taking place, and when the votes were all counted, about the middle of June, Governor Damas announced officially that the assembly had been confirmed.⁸ Declaring then that it was competent to deal with any part of the colonial administration except the military defense, the assembly proceeded to the task of drafting a colonial constitution. The Intendant, Foulon d'Ecolier, who was still lingering around, was ordered to leave the colony at once, his office having already been abolished. And on July 14, the National Assembly was advised by decree that the status of slaves and freedmen in Martinique must not be interfered with.⁹ But the assembly proceeded no further along this path which, as we have seen, led the assembly of Saint Marc to destruction; its activity was suddenly interrupted by another outbreak of hostilities.

The troops left in garrison at Saint Pierre had at length been persuaded by the inhabitants of the city that it was an act of tyranny to hale away to prison the persons suspected of disorderly conduct on Corpus Christi Day. The troops at Fort Royal had been persuaded of the same thing by the prisoners and witnesses confined in that city. Accordingly, on September 1, nearly all the regular troops in Martinique mutinied and set free the prisoners implicated in the affair of the mulattoes. Governor Damas and the assembly took refuge at Gros Morne, a defensible position in the interior of the island, and collected a small army of mulattoes, freed slaves and irregular troops, and made sorties in the direction of Saint Pierre. This was the situation when Barnave, on November 29, 1790, gave the National Assembly a brief account of the troubles.

⁸ *Procès-verbal*, no. 404, p. 21. *Rapport fait * * * le 10 Novembre*, 19. *Moniteur* (9 septembre 1790), 1039.

Though Barnave's report was occasioned by the disturbances in Martinique, the recommendations which followed comprehended all the French colonies in the West Indies. Guadeloupe was faction-ridden and there were disturbances in Tobago.¹⁹ Santo Domingo was in a measure peaceful after the departure of the Eighty-five, but the Governor needed additional troops for the purposes of police. "These things being so," said Barnave in the report, "here are the findings of your committee. You have requested the colonial assemblies to make propositions. In Santo Domingo this work has long been delayed by disturbances. The other colonies as yet have done nothing. Martinique has drafted propositions; it has even made a pretense of following your Instruction; but its assembly has adopted decrees which provide that laws concerning mulattoes, made in the colony, need only the sanction of the King to make them valid; and its assembly has set itself up as an administrative body. Now, in authorizing the colonies to make their own local laws, you did not intend that their assemblies should assume the function of administrative bodies. You did not intend that they should interfere with that part of the administration which concerns our relations with the colonies. You have always intended that this part of the administration should remain in the hands of officials appointed by the nation. But the colonial assembly of Martinique, assuming the function of an administrative assembly, decided that the office of Intendant was useless; so it dismissed M. Foulon, as well as two of his subordinates, and appointed in his place a man entirely subservient to the colonial assembly. The organiza-

¹⁹ *Rapport fait * * * le 10 Novembre, 20. Moniteur* (19 septembre 1790), 1083.

²⁰ *Moniteur* (21 novembre 1790), 1341; *ibid.* (1 juillet 1790), 744. *Procès-verbal*, no 334, p. 13.

tion of the colonies is going to pieces. The old laws are without force, and the new are infinitely slow in being established. Everything indicates that the colonies do not have enough light. * * * We think that they would find a new Instruction, containing a veritable organization, very advantageous."¹¹

This was a confession that the means so far adopted for the execution of the colonial policy of the National Assembly had proved inadequate. Either through ignorance or through bad intention, the colonial assemblies had insisted on executing their own decrees without waiting for the approval of the Governor or the King or the National Assembly. Unless the colonies were granted the desired measure of independence which they seemed to take for granted, the National Assembly would have to persuade the colonies to obey instructions by a display of armed force. Accordingly, Barnave proposed as a decree, on November 29, that the assembly of Martinique be suspended and that the officials dismissed by it be reinstated in office; that a new Instruction be drafted and sent to the colonies; that in addition to the military forces voted on October 12, six thousand troops and six battleships be dispatched to the West Indies; that four commissioners be sent to Martinique to investigate the disturbances on the spot and to provide for the immediate needs of the colony; that the four commissioners be intrusted with the supreme command of all the military forces by land and sea and that they be required to visit any colony, when occasion demanded, to calm apprehensions and to suppress disorders. The National Assembly would thus have agents on the spot competent to explain authoritatively every detail of the new Instruction and

¹¹ *Moniteur* (30 novembre 1790), 1382.

able to enforce obedience. More vigor would thus be infused into the execution of the colonial policy, and the colonists would be entirely without pretexts for misunderstandings. So the decree was adopted with but little opposition,¹² and the committee turned its attention to the task of drafting a new Instruction.

But before the task was finished and the new Instruction submitted to the National Assembly for approval, the committee on colonies was to experience a vicissitude of fortune. For nine months it had been eminently successful in securing the adoption, often without discussion, of all its recommendations; but from now on it was to meet with opposition and obstruction. In the Jacobin Club and in the galleries of the National Assembly there was developing a sentiment in regard to the sacred rights of man more radical than that entertained by Barnave and the friends of Barnave; popular favor, hitherto enjoyed by the leaders of the Left Center, was shifting to those of the Extreme Left.¹³ In consequence, the National Assembly, always quite sensitive to outside influences, was disposed now to be fault-finding as regards the committee; and the committee, in turn, was disposed to be apologetic at times and more cautious than ever before. A series of incidents in January, 1791, shows the effect of this changing sentiment on the fortunes of the committee.

On January 11, Moreau de Saint-Méry, deputy for Martinique, explained that six separate committees were dealing independently with various phases of the colonial problem and that, under the circumstances, there would inevitably be interference and conflict of one committee with another. He therefore moved that it be declared irregular for committees to

¹² *Procès-verbal*, no. 486, pp. 28-31.

¹³ *Oeuvres de Barnave*, I. 125.

propose to the National Assembly any measure relative to the colonies without having first conferred with the committee on colonies.¹⁴ In this way unity of action would be secured and the work of the committee be made more effective. But instantly Pétion and Robespierre were up in arms. The committee, they said, had caused all the troubles in the colonies and was now trying to prevent others from prescribing remedies for the colonial ills. The committee was aiming at a dictatorship. Was the National Assembly going to abdicate in favor of the committee on colonies? Moreau de Saint-Méry hastened to explain that his motive was not at all sinister, that he was only striving to secure more effective work by co-operation of committees; but he failed to carry the National Assembly with him. The motion was laid on the table.¹⁵

On January 20, Louis Monneron, deputy for Pondicherry, complained that nothing had been done to redress the grievances of his constituents, and demanded that the committee turn its attention to the organization of the colonial governments in the East Indies. Barnave replied that there was a special committee for this purpose, but he was informed that such was not the case. Then a deputy said: "It is high time that you give all your colonies a general and definite organization. They are all a prey to the most frightful disorders. It is the duty of the committee on colonies to recommend to you definite plans for the pacification and organization of all your distant possessions. They should all be under the same laws and the same régime. If you appoint an Asiatic committee, you must also appoint an African committee, an American committee, and finally a committee for each colony." The present committee needs to be more efficient. To this criticism Barnave

¹⁴ *Moniteur* (13 janvier 1791), 50.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* *Procès-verbal*, no. 528, p. 21.

replied apologetically: "The committee labors unceasingly on the new Instruction for the colonies. Every week it holds three meetings to which are invited the deputies extraordinary of commerce and manufactures, the colonial deputies, and those colonists in Paris who are best informed on colonial affairs.¹⁶ Very soon we are going to present to you a comprehensive plan. As to the colonies in the East Indies, we did not understand that we were to deal with them, because they are far away and because their organization will probably be different from that of the colonies in the West Indies; but if we are expected to take this task in hand, I ask that M. Louis Monneron be added to the committee on colonies to give us the benefit of his knowledge and experience." Thereupon the National Assembly added Louis Monneron to the committee, as requested, and directed that the colonies in the East Indies be given an organization.¹⁷ But strangely enough no action followed this decision, and after awhile it was even forgotten that Louis Monneron was a member of the committee on colonies.

On January 24, Nairac, a wealthy merchant deputy from Bordeaux, insisted on reading an address from his merchant constituents. In reply to the demand that he submit his document to the committee on colonies, he said testily: "I have submitted a score of documents to that committee already and that was the last I heard of them." So the National Assembly

¹⁶ Barnave refers here to the Eighty-five, the five delegates from the parishes of Port-au-Prince and Croix-des-Bouquets, the six delegates from the provincial assembly of Cap Français, and the members of the Massiac Club. Though the Massiac Club refused to recognize the committee, it permitted its members to attend the meetings of the committee, if they so desired, as individuals. Letter of the Massiac Club, dated June 16, 1791. Arch. Nat., Dxxv. 87.

¹⁷ *Moniteur* (22 janvier 1791), 90. *Procès-verbal*, no. 537, p. 19.

permitted him to read. Conditions in the colonies, said the address, are growing worse every day. Santo Domingo is in a general ferment. Martinique is desolated. The succor promised by the decrees of October 12 and November 29 has not left our shores. All France is astonished at the little interest taken in our colonies. It is a crime to treat the massacre of our brothers and the destruction of our commerce as light matters. We demand that M. Damas, Governor of Martinique, be recalled to give an account of his conduct.¹⁸ After the reading, Nairac showed a disposition to make a fiery speech in support of the address, but pressure of other business forced him to yield the floor. The National Assembly, however, ordered the committee to take the matter in hand and submit a report on it right away.¹⁹

On the following day Barnave was ready with what he had to say on the subject. He explained that the demands of the merchants of Bordeaux were in the process of being complied with. The four commissioners and the military forces destined for Martinique and the new Governor appointed to supersede Damas were all at Brest ready to embark. Also the two battleships destined for Santo Domingo were at Lorient ready to weigh anchor. The committee was constantly urging the King's ministers to hasten the execution of the decrees. What more could the committee do? It could not be recommending new decrees every week in regard to occurrences two thousand leagues from France. The execution of the old decrees would be much more advisable than the adoption of new ones. He asked the National Assembly to relieve the committee, therefore, of the obligation to recommend further measures. But his request was not granted. Le Chapelier

¹⁸ *Journal des États-généraux*, XX. 299-300.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* *Procès-verbal*, no. 541, p. 5.

mentioned that the deputies for Santo Domingo desired commissioners for that colony to calm apprehensions and to prevent the new colonial assembly, if one should convene, from adopting any resolutions contrary to the new Instruction "which M. Barnave is going to draw up and present to you in the name of the committee." "For I tell you," Le Chapelier continued, "that reports have it that the stronger faction in Santo Domingo is prosecuting in the law courts members of the weaker faction under pretext of disorderly conduct. It is necessary then to send commissioners there to stop these judicial proceedings."²⁰ Barnave replied that there was no need to hurry, but the National Assembly insisted that the committee present a draft decree within a week.²¹

Accordingly, Barnave made a report at the evening session of February 1. He took occasion to explain the general plan which the committee was developing. The new Instruction was intended to be a body of rules, positive, clear and precise, which the colonists must not transgress. The commissioners to Martinique were to suppress disorders, reconcile the rival factions, explain the benevolent disposition of the National Assembly, and prepare the way for the reception of the Instruction. The same system was to be applied to Santo Domingo and French Guiana. The decree which he then proposed provided that the King should send three commissioners to Santo Domingo and that, in addition to the usual authority, they be empowered to suspend, if deemed necessary, all criminal prosecutions in the colony; that the new colonial assembly, if it had convened, be ordered to suspend the execution of all its decrees, even though these decrees had been sanctioned by the Governor, until the arrival of the new Instruction; and that

²⁰ *Journal des États-généraux*, XX. 333.

²¹ *Moniteur* (26 janvier 1791), 106. *Procès-verbal*, no. 542, p. 8.

French Guiana, owing to its distance from the other colonies, be granted two special commissioners.²² But in the discussion that followed, the question arose, What could commissioners do in the colonies without instructions? Barnave replied that in Martinique, where factional strife was raging, the four commissioners might begin their duties with ministerial instructions only; but in Santo Domingo and French Guiana, where conditions are more tranquil, their presence would not be necessary until the completion of the new Instruction. "It is to be presumed," he continued, "that the committee can finish the Instruction at two more meetings; but when the work is finished, we shall not submit it to you at once. We shall first ask that three other committees—those on the constitution, on agriculture and commerce, and on marine—be associated with the committee on colonies to revise the work; for we are as sorry, as embarrassed, as any one else that the preceding decrees concerning the colonies have not solved all the difficulties. Although the Instruction of March 28, which is eminently the most important decree passed by the National Assembly, was thoroughly discussed in the committee, we declare nevertheless—at least I do personally—that we desire that no decree be adopted in the future before it has been thoroughly discussed by all those who are interested in it."²³ "Behold Barnave," says the *Patriote français*, "bringing forth fruits meet for repentance."²⁴

When the evening session of February 1 closed, it was understood that the four commissioners already appointed for Martinique would depart at once, that the King would shortly appoint three commissioners for Santo Domingo and two for

²² *Journal des États-généraux*, XXI. 24-27.

²³ *Ibid.*, 28-29.

²⁴ *Patriote français*, no. 545, p. 13.

French Guiana,²⁵ that the committees on the constitution, on agriculture and commerce, and on marine would be shortly associated with the committee on colonies for the work of revision, and that the new Instruction thus revised would be submitted, at the earliest possible moment, to the National Assembly for approval. And this program was partly carried out. The four commissioners left Brest for Martinique on February 5,²⁶ and those for Santo Domingo and French Guiana were appointed by the King at the end of March;²⁷ but the rest of the program was delayed by Barnave's desire to have the new Instruction discussed by all those interested in it.

At this time there were in Paris, outside the National Assembly, the following groups of men interested in the new Instruction: the deputies extraordinary of commerce and manufactures, the six delegates from the provincial assembly of Cap Français, the five delegates from the parishes of Port-au-Prince and Croix-des-Bouquets, the Eighty-five, the Massiac Club, and the mulattoes. All these had been invited to attend the meetings of the committee on colonies and give their views. The first three groups in the order mentioned above agreed to accept the Instruction on a certain condition;²⁸ the Massiac Club, as ever before, remained irreconcilable; the attitude of the Eighty-five and the mulattoes needs a much longer explanation.

The Eighty-five had been retained under arrest because, if released, they would likely return to Santo Domingo and create trouble. It was not Barnave's intention that they be heard at the bar in defense of their personal conduct until the new

²⁵ *Procès-verbal*, no. 549, pp. 23-24.

²⁶ *Ibid.* no. 557, p. 19.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 744, pp. 23-25.

²⁸ This condition is mentioned at the beginning of chapter V. p. 98.

Instruction had been completed and accepted.²⁹ But they were restive under duress. At the morning session of March 5, 1791, a Secretary began to read a letter which ran as follows: "Mr. President, we find it impossible to reconcile the spirit of justice and prudence which characterizes the National Assembly with its persistent refusal to hear us. It is true that the National Assembly has already condemned us once upon a false accusation, without having heard us (Murmurs) * * * We persist, in the name of the colony of which we are the legislators, in demanding that we be heard" (Loud murmurs). At this point a motion was made that the authors of this letter be summoned to the bar and reprimanded. But Barnave interposed with the explanation that, though this was the work of the Eighty-five, it was not that of the Eighty-five as a body. "The great majority of them," said Barnave, "have attended the meetings of the committee on colonies and there have discussed the interests of their country. They have given proofs of their moderation, and have demonstrated to us by their conduct and opinions that most of the errors into which they have fallen have been the result of honest misunderstandings."³⁰ This explanation put matters in a different light, and the National Assembly, for the sake of the repenting members of the Eighty-five, contented itself with a decree in which the authors, and only the authors, of the letter were reprimanded without being summoned to the bar.³¹

Finding that nothing was to be gained by insolent behavior, the Eighty-five changed their tactics and, addressing a very respectful petition to the National Assembly, on March 30, they obtained permission to appear at the bar, in defense of

²⁹ *Point du Jour*, no. 595, pp. 389-390. *Procès-verbal*, no. 573, pp. 7-8.

³⁰ *Journal des États-généraux*, XXII. 244-245.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 247. *Moniteur* (7 mars 1791), 268. *Procès-verbal* no. 581, p. 12.

their conduct, at the evening session of March 31. Through their counsel, the notorious Linguet, they consumed two evening sessions with their defense. Elaborate proof was offered that the general assembly of Saint Marc represented the will of Santo Domingo and that the "Constitutional Bases" of May 28 did not violate the Instruction of March 28. But their reasoning was not convincing. No matter whether the general assembly represented the will of Santo Domingo or not, the fact remained that the general assembly had failed to recognize the paramount authority of the National Assembly, and for that reason it had been dissolved and the Eighty-five placed under arrest. At the close of their defense, on April 5, Barnave simply announced that the new Instruction was at length completed and asked that the committees on the constitution, on agriculture and commerce, and on marine be now associated with the committee on colonies to revise the work. He then made a motion, by way of replying to Linguet, that the affair of the Eighty-five be referred to the four associated committees; and the National Assembly so ordered.³²

It was quite apparent that the Eighty-five were making no headway toward exoneration in that direction. Their defense was weak. Accordingly, on April 25, forty-seven of them³³ bowed to the necessity of signing a formal recantation of all their political heresies. "We do not hesitate," they said, "to recognize authentically that the National Assembly is invested with supreme authority over all that bears the French name;"³⁴

³² *Moniteur* (9 avril 1791), 405-406. *Procès-verbal*, no. 612, pp. 14-18.

³³ At this time six were dead and a dozen or fifteen were on a leave of absence from Paris; so that the forty-seven constituted the great majority. *Lettre du Citoyen Larchevesque-Thibaud* (Paris, 1793), 24.

³⁴ *Les Américains réunis à Paris, & ci-devant Composant l'Assemblée générale de la Partie française de Saint-Domingue, à l'Assemblée nationale* (Paris, 1791), 5.

and they said that they were going to petition the National Assembly to convert the new Instruction into a formal constitution for the colonies. Thus the committee had, in a measure, disposed of opposition from this quarter.

But the other group of opponents was not so easily disposed of. Since the adoption of the decree of October 12, the *Amis des Noirs* had been demanding with renewed vigor that the enfranchisement of the mulattoes in the colonies be explicitly guaranteed.³⁵ This demand was now supported, throughout France, by the rising tide of Jacobin sentiment in favor of the universal application of the Declaration of the rights of Man. And soon there was plain indication that the cause was gaining ground. When the motion of Moreau de Saint-Méry was defeated, on January 11, 1791, by the efforts of Pétion and Robespierre, the *Courier de Provence* said: "This act of justice promises that now the defenders of liberty and humanity will be heard, that MM. Pétion, Grégoire and Mirabeau may raise their voices in defense of the mulattoes oppressed by the whites."³⁶ And about the same time Brissot wrote: "Barnave

³⁵ Immediately after the adoption of the decree of October 12, the following pamphlets appeared in quick succession: Grégoire, *Lettre aux Philantropes, sur les Malheurs, les Droits et les Réclamations des Gens de Couleur de Saint-Domingue, et des autres Iles françaises de l'Amérique*; Pétion, *Discours sur les Troubles de Saint-Domingue* and *Lettre de J. P. Brissot à Barnave*. Appearing, as they did, just as public opinion was becoming radical, these pamphlets issued by such prominent men could not have failed to have a considerable influence. On January 26, 1791, they were followed by another: Raymond, *Observations sur l'Origine et les Progrès du Préjugé des Colons blancs contre les Hommes de Couleur*. In refutation of these pamphlets appeared, on March 1, 1791, an important pamphlet from the pen of the learned Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Considérations présentées aux vrais Amis du Repos et du Bonheur de la France, à l'Occasion des nouveaux Mouvements de quelques soi-disant Amis des Noirs*.

³⁶ *Courier de Provence*, XII. 343.

threatens us at no distant date with the reading of a complete plan for the organization of the colonies. But I can hardly think that the National Assembly will, for the fourth time, adopt from confidence and without discussion the ideas of this puppet of the white colonists. The mask 'is fallen; the man is known; and the National Assembly will not permit itself to be dragged with the same facility into such fatal errors.'³⁷ Thus it would seem that the champions of the mulattoes were predicting success from this changing public sentiment.

The white colonists at Paris also saw the rising tide and took alarm. On February 12, 1791, they all agreed, with the exception of the Massaic Club and the unrepentant members of the Eighty-five, to arouse the commercial and manufacturing cities to the realization of the fact that the mulattoes were about to be enfranchised. It was hoped that these cities could be induced to flood the National Assembly with petitions and remonstrances.³⁸ Accordingly, letters were sent out by the colonists with this end in view. An extract dated February 14 reads: "It is the duty, it is to the interest of all those who know the facts to put the facts before the representatives of the nation with the same energy that obtained for us the decree of March 8. The peril is the same; the dangers are more pressing. Now, as then, each commercial city, each manufacturing city, each department, should appoint deputies extraordinary to co-operate with us for the purpose of bringing addresses to the National Assembly, demanding that, in accordance with the promise of October 12, the National Assembly enact explicitly * * * that the colonists and the colonists

³⁷ *Lettre de J. P. Brissot à M. Raymond* (In Raymond's *Observations*, iii-iv).

³⁸ *Louis-Marthe-de Gouy, Député à l'Assemblée nationale, à ses Commettans* (Paris, mai 1791), 2-4.

alone shall forever have the right to initiate the laws concerning the status of persons * * * Unite with us a second time and our success will destroy even the name of the sect opposed to us."³⁹ To these letters Nantes, Havre, Abbeville, Dunkirk, Rouen, and Dinant responded favorably and sent the required addresses to the National Assembly; but Lyons, Bordeaux,⁴⁰ and other important cities, to the great annoyance of the colonists, neglected to respond.⁴¹ Thus the attempt at co-operation was only a partial success; but the merchants and manufacturers were soon to see that the contingency whereof the colonists warned them was indeed imminent.

On March 3, 1791, the National Assembly received the following petition: "The deputies of the free colored men of the Antilles, deprived, contrary to your decrees, of that right which to all men is the most precious, ask the National Assembly to admit them to the bar, that they may make known their grievances. They feel assured that this privilege will not be denied them by an Assembly which once declared that the oppressed would never seek its aid in vain."⁴² The petition was referred to the President for verification, and he having apparently no personal bias in the matter announced on the next day that the credentials of the mulattoes were regular and satisfactory; that is to say, the mulattoes who since October 22, 1789, had not been able to reach the National Assembly by petition

³⁹ Printed letter beginning: *A Paris le 14 février 1791.*

⁴⁰ The chamber of commerce at Bordeaux was willing to send the address but the municipality, dominated by the Jacobins, refused to allow the address to be sent. *Patriote français*, no. 574, p. 237.

⁴¹ *Louis-Marthe-de Gouy*, 4. *Rapport fait au Nom des Comités réunis de Constitution, de la Marine, d'Agriculture et Commerce, & des Colonies* (Paris, 1791), 3. *Collection des Adresses et Pétitions des Citoyens-Commerçants de la Ville de Nantes, et des Députés extraordinaires du Commerce, sur les Affaires des Colonies* (Nantes, 1791).

⁴² *Journal des États-généraux*, XXII. 191-192. *Point du Jour*, no. 601, p. 6.

or otherwise were now about to be treated with consideration and heard at the bar. But at this juncture Arthur Dillon, deputy for Martinique, arose and in substance said: I am going to speak to an assembly of practical statesmen and not a group of philosophers. I do not approve of race prejudice, but race prejudice exists nevertheless. If you admit this deputation of mulattoes to your bar, the colonies will revolt within fifteen minutes after they receive the news. You promised not to interfere with the status of persons in the colonies, and the colonists accepted your decrees on this distinct understanding. Now a society of so-called philosophers who are sold to England (Loud murmurs) * * * President: You should not make assertions that you can not prove. Dillon: Do not interrupt me. This society, if you listen to it, will reduce France to a desert. If you desire the welfare of France, if you desire the prosperity of our manufactures, if you do not desire to see our colonies inundated in blood, do not admit these mulattoes to the bar. Who are they, anyway? They are only domestic servants, vagabonds, here in Paris, agents of the *Amis des Noirs*. If they have any requests to make, let them go to the committee on colonies. When Dillon had concluded his remarks, Pétion and Mirabeau rushed to the tribune; but their voices were drowned in the tumult. There was the usual call of "question," "question," and the petition was referred to the committee on colonies. Then the day's session was adjourned, though the usual hour for adjournment had not arrived, and the deputies marched out of the hall, leaving Pétion and Mirabeau gesticulating in the tribune.⁴³

But these tactics were now outworn. Outside the National Assembly, public sentiment was emphatically on the side of

⁴³ *Moniteur* (6 mars 1791), 264. *Journal des États-généraux*, XXII. 222-224. *Procès-verbal*, no 580, pp. 17-18.

the *Amis des Noirs*. This defeat of March 4 only made their ultimate victory more nearly certain. On March 9, the Jacobin Club of Angers took up the cause and sent out a circular letter "to their brothers of all the patriotic societies of the kingdom," in which they made the following statements: For a long time the National Assembly has been deceived concerning the interests of our colonies, and needs to be enlightened. The mulattoes, who own property, pay taxes and help support all the public burdens, should enjoy the rights of active citizenship. On all sides the voice of liberty and humanity makes this demand; but the enemies of justice stifle this voice with their protests. If the National Assembly does not come to the rescue of the mulattoes, they will be reduced to despair. Horrible war will follow; our commerce and agriculture will be destroyed; our colonies will cease to exist.⁴⁴ To this letter at least fifteen replies were made, all of which approved the stand taken by the Jacobins of Angers and some of which promised to petition the National Assembly.⁴⁵ Thus the general public was beginning to be aroused.

On March 18, the mulattoes themselves returned to the charge with a published petition, in which they demanded three things in particular: that the commissioners sent to the colonies be instructed to protect mulattoes in the enjoyment of the right to assemble, to draft petitions, to write pamphlets and to travel where they pleased; that a clause explicitly guaranteeing the enfranchisement of the mulattoes be incorporated in the new Instruction; and that the commissioners be compelled to protect the mulattoes thus enfranchised in the enjoy-

⁴⁴ *Moniteur* (22 mars 1791), 327-328.

⁴⁵ Clavière, *Adresse de la Société des Amis des Noirs* (Second edition, Paris, 10 juillet 1791), 209-229.

ment of their rights as active citizens.⁴⁶ And this petition was followed on March 28 by a long printed address from the *Société des Amis des Noirs* "to the National Assembly, to all the cities of commerce, to all manufactures, to the colonies, to all the societies of the friends of the constitution," in which slavery, the slave trade, and enfranchisement of the mulattoes were exhaustively discussed and the obstructive methods practiced by the white colonists were exposed.⁴⁷

Thus by the last days of April, 1791, the mulatto question had again been raised to the realm of practical politics. Great pressure was going to be brought to bear on the National Assembly, when the new Instruction should be submitted for approval, to secure the enfranchisement of the mulattoes in the French West Indies.

⁴⁶*Pétition nouvelle des Citoyens de Couleur des Iles françaises*, 11.

⁴⁷ Reprinted in the *Courier de Provence* (XIV. 289-445), on April 25.

CHAPTER V.

DECISION OF THE MULATTO QUESTION; EXPOSÉ OF MOTIVES.

As the work of drafting the new Instruction proceeded, the white colonists at Paris were summoned to attend the meetings of the committee from time to time and offer criticisms and suggestions. With the exception of the Massiac Club and the unrepentant members of the Eighty-five, the committee and the colonists eventually reached an agreement on all points; but toward the end of April, when the time had come to present the Instruction to the National Assembly, deep anxiety was felt over the probable fate of the clauses relative to the status of persons. The colonists declared with one voice that they would not adhere to the Instruction unless the National Assembly removed all doubts on this point by an initial decree.¹ Accordingly, the four associated committees drafted a statement of their policy in regard to the status of persons in the colonies and, on May 7, submitted this statement to the National Assembly as a separate report. The following is a brief synopsis:

"The divers petitions from the mulattoes which you have referred to your committees, the divers addresses from the Jacobin societies which remonstrate in their favor, and all the addresses of the cities of commerce upon the same subject have been examined with the most serious attention, with the most scrupulous care. Those who sought to appear at the bar as deputies for the mulattoes of the colonies and whom you referred to your committee have been granted there an audience. They brought only

¹ *Louis-Marthe-de Gouy*, 5-6. *Lettre de M. de Gouy à M. Desmeuniers, Député à l'Assemblée nationale* (Paris, ce 16 juin 1791).

letters bearing a small number of signatures," which we considered unsatisfactory as credentials.

"Your four associated committees are occupied indefatigably with the revision of the work which you intrusted to your committee on colonies, and within a very short time we shall submit to you for approval a complete colonial constitution." Today, however, we are going to submit to you only a statement of our policy in regard to the status of mulattoes and freedmen in the colonies. Our first article reads: "The National Assembly decrees as a constitutional article that no law upon the status of persons can be made by the national legislature for the colonies except upon the precise and formal demand of the colonial assemblies." This article can not but meet with your approval, for it is but the fulfillment of the promise which you made in the preamble of the decree of October 12. "You are told, of course, that what you stated in the preamble of the decree of October 12 ought to suffice. Without doubt it ought to suffice, but as a matter of fact it does not suffice at all." The opponents of the present colonial system are asserting that your promise in the preamble of this important decree is only provisional and liable to instant revocation. The colonists, therefore, should have their fears allayed by a positive constitutional decree which would settle the matter beyond the possibility of doubt.² Moreover, the colonists ought to be given an early opportunity to exercise their right of initiation relative to the status of persons. Accordingly, we recommend the following plan: A congress shall meet at Saint Martin, a small French possession in the center of the archipelago, and there determine uniformly for all the colonies the status of mulattoes and free blacks. This congress shall be composed of representatives from the several colonial assemblies

² I have quoted and paraphrased Stoddard here (*op. cit.*, 121) without using marks of quotation.

taken in the following proportion: twelve from Santo Domingo, six from Guadeloupe, five from Martinique, two from Saint Lucia, two from Tobago, and two from French Guiana. "We repeat, gentlemen," concludes the report, "the circumstances are grave; they are imperious. The measure which we propose has become a necessity;—above all a grave necessity. Discuss if you will, but do not adjourn. The fate of your colonies, of your commerce, and consequently of your political future is bound up with your decision."³

But when the report was finished, Grégoire said: "We have waited four months for this Instruction and, after having waited four months, we can easily wait four more days for the report to be printed and distributed. I move that the discussion be postponed for a few days."⁴ Of course, this motion was fair, reasonable and in accordance with precedent; but the adoption of it was exactly what the white colonists did not desire; for the printed report would be certain to arouse public comment and excite the defenders of the mulattoes. The essential feature of the report needed to be put through immediately. So Moreau de Saint-Méry moved that the decree proposed by the four associated committees be divided into two parts and that the first article, which was no more than the fulfilment of a promise, be adopted without delay; action on the proposed congress at Saint Martin was not so urgent, he said, and might safely be postponed. But the *Amis des Noirs* and the radical Jacobins saw the snare and cried aloud. "If you are going to adopt from confidence every recommendation of the committee on colonies," said Roederer with bitter sarcasm, "I move that it be given the supreme regency over the colonies."

³ *Rapport fait au Nom des Comités réunis de Constitution, de la Marine, d'Agriculture et de Commerce, & des Colonies.* Par M. de Iattre, Député du Département de la Somme (Paris, 1791).

⁴ *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XXV. 262.

(Applause).⁵ It was not difficult to see who had the advantage in the struggle. The motion of Moreau de Saint-Méry was lost and Grégoire's was adopted. Thus the *Amis des Noirs* had been victorious in the preliminary skirmish.

On May 11 the supreme struggle over the long delayed mulatto question was squarely joined. The debate, furious at times and stormy always, consumed five morning sessions. During the first two days the discussion was *sur le fond*—that is, upon the question considered as a whole. The *Amis des Noirs* and the radical Jacobins traced the troubles in the colonies to incendiary letters written to the colonies by white colonists in France, and to the refusal of the white colonists to obey the decrees of the National Assembly. They emphasized the universal application of the Declaration of the Rights of Man, and insisted that article IV of the Instruction of March 28 conferred the rights of active citizenship upon all persons with certain residence and property qualifications—*all persons* without distinction of color; that the preamble of the decree of October 12 was not a promise and could not be so construed; that the veiled threats of the colonies to secede from France if the mulattoes should be declared active citizens were perfectly harmless; that the adoption of the proposed plan for a congress at Saint Martin would be tantamount to a refusal to enfranchise the mulattoes; that the whites desired to reduce the mulattoes to the condition of helots; and that if the National Assembly did not intervene, the colonies would soon be devastated and commerce destroyed by an interminable race war. On the other hand, the opponents of mulatto enfranchisement attributed all the troubles to the writings of the *Amis des Noirs* sent clandestinely to the colonies. They insisted that it was impracticable to apply the Declaration of the Rights of Man to the colonies; that the National Assembly had formally recognized this fact in

⁵ *Moniteur* (9 mai 1791), 530.

the decree of March 8; that the much vaunted article IV of the Instruction of March 28 was only a provisional measure, ineffective after the first colonial assemblies had convened; that the preamble of the decree of October 12 was indeed a solemn promise which it would be dishonorable to break; that the planters who would sit in the proposed congress at Saint Martin would certainly ameliorate the condition of the mulattoes; and that if the National Assembly should commit the folly of enfranchising the mulattoes without the previous consent of the white colonists, a horrible race war would begin and end only with the destruction of the colonial prosperity of France.

At the close of the second session, the discussion *sur le fond* was closed, and a motion to reject *in toto* the recommendation of the four associated committees was lost by a vote of 378 to 298.⁶ This was a test vote and revealed the party alignment. The Right and the Left Center voted solidly with the white colonists; the Extreme Left voted solidly with the *Amis des Noirs*; the Center was divided in opinion,⁷ and to the Center the speakers now directed their appeals.

During the evening of May 12, all the white colonists in Paris, except the members of the Massiac Club and the unrepentant members of the Eighty-five, held a meeting and agreed "to give our adversaries the *coup de grâce* on the morrow by proposing to the National Assembly that negro slavery be categorically recognized and guaranteed in the colonies."⁸ Consequently, on May 13, Moreau de Saint-Méry moved, as an amendment to the recommendation of the four associated committees, that the following be adopted as the first article: "The National Assembly decrees,

⁶ *Journal des États-généraux*, XXV, 447. These figures are not official; none such exist. The *Moniteur* gives the vote as 378 to 286.

⁷ *Louis-Marthe-de Gouy*, 21-22.

⁸ *Louis-Marthe-de Gouy*, 19.

as a constitutional article, that no law upon the status of slaves in the French West Indies can ever be made by the national legislature except upon the formal and spontaneous demand of the colonial assemblies."⁹ For several hours a debate, fast and furious, raged upon this motion; but eventually the word *slaves* was changed to *persons not free*, and the motion was adopted by a substantial majority.¹⁰ Thus on this important point all doubts were at length removed.

On May 14, the question before the house was the consideration of the original article I of the committees; but no new arguments were advanced. At the close of the session, a motion to lay the proposition on the table was lost by a vote of 488 to 354.¹¹ Then the President announced that the debate would be resumed on the next day.

So far in the contest the white colonists had had a small advantage, but what the morrow held in store no man could foresee. The national deputies were growing weary of the discussion and longing for a compromise. The colonists had need to look sharp to maintain their small majority.

The session of May 15 opened with a pathetic appeal from the mulattoes. "We pray the National Assembly," so ran their petition, "not to despoil us completely of the little liberty left us—that is, the liberty to abandon the soil steeped in the blood of our brothers. Permit us to flee the sharp edge of the law which the

⁹ *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XXV. 464-465.

¹⁰ *Procès-verbal*, no. 649, p. 8. *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XXV. 483.

¹¹ There was a roll call and the votes were counted, but the different reports do not agree. The *Journal des Etats-généraux*, (XXV. 509). and the *Point du Jour* (no. 672, p. 192) give the vote as 488 to 354. But the latter may have copied from the former. The *Moniteur* gives the vote as 388 to 355.

¹² *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XXVI. 11-12.

whites are suspending over us.”¹² In response, the galleries and the Extreme Left rang with applause. Then Rewbell, a radical Jacobin, took advantage of the enthusiasm to propose the following as a compromise measure: “The National Assembly decrees that the national legislature will never enact laws concerning the political status of colored people *who are not born of free parents* without the previous, free and spontaneous consent of the colonial assemblies; * * * but colored people born of free parents shall be allowed to vote in all future parochial and colonial elections, if they have otherwise the required qualifications.”¹³ Loud and prolonged applause from the entire hall greeted this proposal, and forthwith, writes Gouy d’Arsy, the colonists lost two hundred votes.¹⁴ Barnave tried to turn the tide but, though he tried for an hour, his efforts were unavailing. The deputies on the Extreme Left arose to their feet and shouted continuously: “Question, question, close the discussion.”¹⁵ Finally Rewbell’s motion was put to vote and carried by acclamation. Voices on the Right cried, “Division;” the Extreme Left applauded, and the galleries shouted, “Bravo.”¹⁶

Thus was passed the decree of May 15. It enfranchised only a small percentage of the mulattoes and the free blacks, certainly not a sufficient number to influence elections;¹⁷ but the white colonists affected despair. “I departed from the hall,” wrote Gouy d’Arsy, “with tears in my eyes and death in my soul.”¹⁸ And on the next day the deputies for the West Indies formally

¹² *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁴ *Louis-Marthe-de Gouy*, 24.

¹⁵ *Journal des États-généraux*, XXVI. 16.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 30.

¹⁷ Statements in *Journal des États-généraux*, XXXIII. 239-240. *Lettre du Citoyen Larchevesque-Thibaud*, 43-44.

¹⁸ *Louis-Marthe-de Gouy*, 27.

notified the National Assembly that they would thenceforth absent themselves from its sessions.¹⁹

What intrigues were woven in the days that followed, it is impossible, except in part, to discover. All the white colonists at Paris reconciled their differences in the presence of this common misfortune and, at a general meeting, all present agreed "that it was necessary to quit the continent, to regain their plantations and protect their property against invasion from without and fermentation from within."²⁰ On May 17, the deputies for Santo Domingo sent an official letter to each of the three provinces of that colony, giving an account of the five days' debate and the unfortunate result;²¹ and the other white colonists favored their constituents in the same way.²² An individual letter which, when printed, contains forty-six octavo pages was sent by Gouy d'Arsy to his constituents²³ as his contribution to the general lamentation. And on June 7, Daugy, one of the Eighty-five, wrote thus to the planters resident in the Northern Province: "Our possessions are endangered by this decree of the National Assembly relative to the colored people. * * * Today resistance becomes the duty of every good patriot; but in order that resistance be effective, it must be unanimous."²⁴ Thus the evidence, so far as it is available, in-

¹⁹ *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XXVI. 66. *Copies exactes des Lettres adressées au Président de l'Assemblée nationale, par les Députés des Colonies* (s. l. n. d.).

²⁰ *Louis-Marthe-de Gouy*, 35.

²¹ *Ibid.* 41.

²² *Garran, op. cit.*, II. 94.

²³ *Louis-Marthe-de Gouy, Député à l'Assemblée nationale, à ses Commettans* (Paris, ce 15-31 mai 1791). That this letter was actually sent to the Santo Domingo, see *Lettre de M. de Gouy, Député de Saint-Domingue, à l'Assemblée nationale* (Paris, ce 23 Août 1791).

²⁴ *Garran, op. cit.*, II. 94-100. Letter quoted *in extenso*.

dictates that the white colonists were stirring up opposition to the execution of the decree.

In the meanwhile, the radical Jacobins in the National Assembly were fully aware of what was going on and were of no mind to be circumvented. On May 17, Regnaud, of Saint-Jean-d'Angely, called attention to the disaffection of the white colonists in France and to the indisposition of the four associated committees to make further recommendations. The inhabitants of the colonies, he said, must receive knowledge of your true intentions before their minds are hopelessly poisoned; and he moved that the National Assembly explain its intentions by an *Exposé* of Motives. Dupont de Nemours then moved that, in addition, an embargo be placed on all outgoing vessels to prevent letters from reaching the colonies in advance of the *Exposé*. The latter motion was lost but the former was adopted, and the four associated committees were ordered to prepare the *Exposé* of Motives.²⁵

But only one member of the four associated committees showed any interest in this matter, and that was Dupont de Nemours. After several futile attempts to get his colleagues together, he drafted an *Exposé* of Motives without assistance. On May 21, he presented the fruit of his labor to the National Assembly and, as no one seemed inclined to comment on it, the President said: "Let those who favor the adoption of this *Exposé* rise," and a majority of the deputies rose.²⁶ Then the storm burst. "What," cried Nairac, "after having instructed the four committees to draft the *Exposé*, you now adopt this work of M. Dupont?" In reply, a deputy said: "There was in Paris today a meeting of the white colonists. Nothing is more urgent than that this *Exposé* be sent to the colonies to sound a warning against

²⁵ *Journal des États-généraux*, XXVI. 75-76. *Procès-verbal*, no. 653, p. 2.

²⁶ *Moniteur* (22 mai 1791), 591.

the efforts of the malevolent; for, I tell you, the position of the colored people is not secure.”²⁷ But the National Assembly decided finally that the definite adoption of Dupont’s Exposé would be deferred until the document could be printed and distributed. In the meanwhile, the President was to ask the King to have a boat ready to carry the Exposé of Motives and the decree of May 15 promptly to the colonies.²⁸

On May 22, the deputies extraordinary of commerce and manufactures requested permission to appear before the House and make observations upon Dupont’s Exposé. A few months earlier, such a petition from this respected body of men would have been readily granted, but now it was greeted with calls for “the order of the day.” Bégouen pleaded: “I can not well see how you can refuse to hear these deputies extraordinary who have been appointed by our principal cities of commerce and manufactures. They have long been officially recognized by you and authorized to work with your committee on agriculture and commerce. They form a regular committee along side the National Assembly, and for two years they have been of great assistance to your committees. (Murmurs). * * * I hope you will not add to the profound grief with which these deputies are already afflicted the humiliation and mortification of a refusal to hear them.” (Loud peals of laughter).²⁹ Rewbell replied: “Who are these deputies? I know them; they are agents in the pay of certain merchants. (On the right: *That’s false.* On the left: *Yes, that’s true.*) They are people of the *Ancien Régime*.”³⁰ And the deputies extraordinary received no permission to make observations.

Two days after this episode, the National Assembly received addresses from the directory of the département of the Gironde,

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 592.

²⁸ *Procès-verbal*, no. 657. p. 8.

²⁹ *Moniteur* (24 mai 1791), 598-599.

and from the chamber of commerce, the Jacobin Club, and the "national coffee house" of Bordeaux. All the addresses expressed the most tender attachment for the cause of the mulattoes and the most unqualified approval of the decree of May 15. Bordeaux, they said, had placed an embargo on all outgoing vessels to prevent unpatriotic letters from reaching the colonies, and moreover the national guards of the département were volunteering to cross the sea and insure in the colonies the correct interpretation of the decree.³¹ "The reading of these addresses and deliberations," say the official minutes of the National Assembly, "was followed by the most lively applause. A member moved that they be printed and deposited in the archives of the National Assembly as the most precious monument of civic virtue, and that the President be instructed to write, in the name of the National Assembly, a letter of satisfaction to the directory of the département of the Gironde and to the chamber of commerce of Bordeaux." And the motion was adopted.³² Thus the support of the great Jacobin stronghold of western France was appreciated.

The Radical Jacobins in the National Assembly now began to urge more than ever before the necessity of haste. As the four associated committees still remained indifferent, it was left to individual initiative to make recommendations. Accordingly, a deputy, on May 27, said: "The département of the Gironde, which alone does one-half our colonial commerce, has expressed to you its gratitude; and its address, endorsed by the districts of the département, by the municipality of Bordeaux, and by the chamber of commerce of the same city, has fully enlightened public opinion. But, gentlemen, the unexpected withdrawal of the

³⁰ *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XXVI, 250.

³¹ *Extrait du Registre des Délibérations de la Chambre du Commerce de la Ville de Bordeaux; et Adresses* (Paris, 1791).

³² *Procès-verbal*, no. 660, p. 9.

deputies of our western colonies and the clamors of a great number of Americans now in France may, by perfidious insinuations and false interpretations, occasion trouble. Therefore I think it high time to adopt M. Dupont's Exposé."³³ "I do not know why your committees," said another deputy, "remain completely inactive despite their instructions to proceed with their work," and he moved that three or four deputies be appointed at once to revise the work of Dupont and submit it to the National Assembly.³⁴ This motion met with opposition, but it was adopted. The President appointed Prugnon, Goupil-Prefelne, Emmery, and La Rochefoucauld—the last two being *Amis des Noirs*, says Gouy d'Arsy³⁵—and asked them to retire from the hall and set their hand to the task.³⁶

On May 29, the revised Exposé of Motives was read to the National Assembly and definitely adopted. As might be expected from its authorship, it was an interesting attempt to apply the doctrine of Rousseau to practical circumstances. "The rights of citizens," it says, "are anterior to, and form the bases of, society. The National Assembly can only recognize and proclaim these rights; happily it is powerless to infringe them." But the "persons not free" cannot be considered citizens, for they are "individuals of a foreign nation." Consequently, the National Assembly has been able in this case to promise, in deference to the demands of the colonists, that no law upon the status of "persons not free" shall ever be made for the colonies by the national legislature except upon the free and spontaneous demand of the colonial assemblies. "It is in this regard only that (until May 15, 1791) the initiative upon the status of persons had been granted

³³ *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XXVI. 378.

³⁴ *Moniteur* (28 mai 1791), 615.

³⁵ *Louis-Marthe-de Gouy*, 40.

³⁶ *Procès-verbal*, no. 663, pp. 15-16.

to the colonists." On the other hand, however, the mulattoes and the free blacks must be considered citizens. "Reason, common-sense, and the positive text of the law declare that the colonies are composed of all the free citizens who inhabit them, and that all these citizens ought to have a voice in the election of the legislative assemblies destined to exercise for them the right of initiative. * * * And if there was ever any doubt on this point, it was removed by the decree of March 28 which * * * says formally and unequivocally (Art. IV) that every free person—proprietor taxpayer, and resident for two years—shall enjoy the rights of active citizenship. It was not in the power of the National Assembly to refuse to adopt this decree; it was not in the power of the National Assembly to restrict the sense of it, or in any way to infringe the rights of citizenship." Yet the colonial deputies kept insisting that there should be an intermediate class between the "persons not free" and the active citizens, kept insisting that there be a class which enjoys civic rights but not political rights; moreover, they insisted that the colonial assemblies should have the privilege of determining the composition of this intermediate class and erroneously contended that this privilege had been promised in the preamble of the decree of October 12. To all these demands the National Assembly has graciously yielded so far as it had power to yield. "It could have refused positively to form the intermediate class; it could have insisted on the literal interpretation of the decree relative to the status of persons; but it has preferred to deal with the colonies as a fond mother deals with her children. Therefore it has consented to form the intermediate class and to include in it the freedmen and even the free men born of unfree parents." Thus the right to initiate laws upon status of persons has been extended far beyond the original intention of the National Assembly.

"A wise precaution has been taken to prevent all agitation in the colonies: there will be a delay between the promulgation of the decree of May 15 and the execution of it. * * * During this interval prejudice will have time to die out." Sentiments of justice and humanity and patriotism will supersede prejudice. The whites will come to regard the mulattoes as their brothers.

"What more beautiful token of esteem could France give the colonies? They will enjoy the right to initiate constitutional laws upon the status of 'persons not free' and of persons born of unfree parents. With what more beautiful function could France invest them? They have the glorious opportunity to advise the national legislature in regard to the amelioration of the condition of these two unfortunate classes—to suggest measures of relief for suffering humanity; and moreover they may suggest compromises and modifications in the general laws of the empire. * * * Can one imagine a greater number of concession, more honoring and more flattering? Is there anywhere a mother country who has abandoned to her colonies the exercise of such a privilege in regard to the most important acts of legislation? The National Assembly has granted everything to the colonies—everything save the sacrifice of the imprescriptible rights of a class of citizens which nature and nature's law render an integral part of political society—everything save the reversal of the life-giving principles of the French constitution. * * *

"The National Assembly has instructed its four associated committees to complete and submit without delay the new Instruction. This Instruction will be sent to the colonies, not to infringe their right of initiative as some imagine, but to furnish a collection of ideas. The colonial assemblies are exhorted to accept this Instruction for what it is intrinsically worth. They can adopt it, they can modify it, they can even reject it entirely and adopt any other measure which they may deem better calculated to afford them

happiness and prosperity.”³⁷ The colonists must obey the decree of May 15, but they shall not be compelled to obey the Instruction. This concession, observed a deputy, is “the honey added to the cup of bitterness.”³⁸

The Exposé was adopted without discussion, but a lively discussion followed the adoption. Regnaud made the usual charge that the enemies of the public welfare were plotting against the execution of the decree of May 15, and moved that the President be sent to the King with the request that the Exposé be dispatched promptly to the colonists. Malouet, in reply, made the counter charge that the defenders of the decree were the persons plotting. He declared that addresses were arriving daily from the maritime cities, but that the radical Jacobins withheld these addresses from the knowledge of the National Assembly. The opponents of the decree, he said, were not enemies of the Revolution as popular clamor seemed to indicate, but cleared-headed statesmen who could foresee the dire consequences of any attempt to execute the decree. The decree needed to be modified and properly interpreted. It should be said that the decree enfranchised the colored people born of free parents but did not make them eligible to office. Add then, he urged, an interpretative clause, providing that the colonial assemblies shall have the initiative in fixing the qualifications for eligibility to office, and the colonists will be satisfied.³⁹

Frequent murmurs interrupted Malouet and when he had finished, each side, in a confused debate, accused the other of perfidy and misrepresentation. “Four days ago,” said Dupont, “I saw upon the desk of the committee on colonies an address which has

³⁷ *Extrait des Procès-verbaux de l'Assemblée nationale, relativement à l'Etat des Personnes dans les Colonies*. Sub-title: *Exposé des Motifs des Décrets des 13 & 15 Mai, sur l'Etat des Personnes dans les Colonies* (Paris, 1791).

³⁸ *Journal des États-généraux*, XXVI. 378.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 472-474.

not yet been received from Nantes. If you have not received this address, which predicts great calamities, it is simply because the courier has not returned with it yet." Blin indignantly replied that the address was indeed drafted at Nantes, that it had been sent to the deputies extraordinary of commerce and manufacturers and by them submitted to the committee on colonies. Dupont: "I asked a member of the committee if the address which I saw was really from Nantes, and another member replied that the address had not arrived yet." Blin: "I bear witness that it was from Nantes, and I challenge M. Dupont to prove the contrary." Dupont: "I know no more than what I have stated." (Murmurs).⁴⁰ Rewbell then insinuated that an address from Havre was really the work of Bégouen,⁴¹ and a deputy in reply asked if the much vaunted address from the Gironde was not really drafted in Paris.⁴² These mutual recriminations afforded Cazalès an excellent opportunity to demand, with an appearance of plausibility, that the sending of the decree and the Exposé to the colonies be postponed until the views of commerce and the colonies could be definitely ascertained.⁴³ But of course delay was exactly what the radical Jacobins did not desire. So the demand of Cazalès was rejected amidst applause from the galleries, and the motion of Regnaud was adopted.⁴⁴ This made the King's ministers responsible for the prompt expedition of the Exposé to the colonies.

But nearly two weeks passed and still no steps seemed to be taken to carry out the orders of the National Assembly. Accordingly, on June 19, Rabaut de Saint-Étienne said: "I make the motion that there be appointed forthwith two or three deputies to

⁴⁰ *Moniteur* (30 mai 1791), 618 [624].

⁴¹ *Journal des États-généraux*, XXVI. 475.

⁴² *Moniteur* (30 mai 1791), 618 [624].

⁴³ *Moniteur* (30 mai 1797), 618 [624]. *Procès-verbal*, no. 665, p. 14.

⁴⁴ *Journal des États-généraux*, XXVI. 476.

wait on the Minister of Marine and ascertain what has been done toward the execution of the decree of May 15 and toward the expedition of the Exposé to the colonies."⁴⁵ And le Chapelier moved that the four associated committees be given positive orders to submit the rest of their work on the "colonial constitution." "The committees," he said, "were occupied with this work; they had almost completed their task; they were only awaiting the pleasure of the National Assembly to make a report; but this work was discontinued precisely at the time your decree of May 15 was adopted, and the members of the committees discontinued their attendance at the meetings."⁴⁶ Both these motions were adopted. The National Assembly sent a small committee to wait on the Minister of Marine, and ordered the associated committees to "render an account at once of their work concerning the constitution of the colonies."⁴⁷

During the same session word was brought back from the Minister "that the commissioners appointed for the execution of the decree were ready to depart, that the ships had been ready also for more than a month in the ports of Brest, Lorient, and Rochefort; but the Minister did not know whether the commissioners were to depart with only the decree of May 15 and the Exposé of Motives, or to wait for the Instruction relative to the constitution of the colonies." The National Assembly appreciated the dilemma in which the Minister found himself and, instead of censuring him for unnecessary delay, it referred the question which he raised to the four associated committees for decision.⁴⁸

Thus driven to the task, the four associated committees, on June 14, announced that the Instruction for Santo Domingo, the

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, XXVII. 290.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 291.

⁴⁷ *Procès-verbal*, no. 677, p. 6.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

principal colony,⁴⁹ was ready for approval, and Defermon, the reporter, offered to read the document. Straightway, however, various objections were raised. Adrien Duport, apparently seeking further delay, said that, as the reading would be long, tiresome and unprofitable, the Instruction might best be printed first and distributed. Tracy, a radical Jacobin, insisted that the commissioners be ordered to depart at once with only the decree of May 15 and the *Exposé*. "It is a very great question," he said, "whether, after having granted to the colonial assemblies the exclusive initiative, we should make a constitution for them." Another deputy objected to making a constitution for the colonies in the absence of the colonial deputies. To all the objections, Dêmeunier, member of the committee on constitution, replied: "We are not making a *constitution* for the colonies; we are only drafting a simple memorandum which we shall authorize the Minister of Marine to send to the colonies as an Instruction. The small colonies especially need such a memorandum. It is easy to see how Chandernagore, for example, or any other small colony would be very much embarrassed if we did not give it a sort of sketch, or outline. It is then, I repeat, only a simple constitutional project which the colonies may either follow or not follow, but which does not in any way bind us since it is not a formal decree. You will only be sending to the colonies an instructional memorandum, a body of information. You can, therefore, without approving the Instruction itself, approve that it be sent to the colonies * * * Here is then the question before the house: Does the National Assembly desire to hear the reading of a draft Instruction which will be sent to the colonies on the understanding that it will not be binding (*sans rien d'impératif*), while informing the colonies at the same time that they, though free to reject the Instruction, must

⁴⁹ The Instruction was intended to be applicable, with slight modifications, to all the other colonies.

yield to the National Assembly the privilege of passing definitively on whatever actions the colonial assemblies may take, whether these actions be in the sense of the Instruction or otherwise?"⁵⁰ The question thus stated was finally decided in the affirmative, and the long Instruction was read.⁵¹

When the reading was at length finished, Pétion pointed out that, notwithstanding what might be said to the contrary, the Instruction, if adopted, would be considered binding; and Grégoire said: "The National Assembly can not be expected, after one simple reading, to send this legislative encyclopedia to the colonies. Instead, the National Assembly should send military forces to the colonies to insure the execution of the decree of May 15." Judging from the tone of the entire debate, it would seem that the Extreme Left, where sat the radical Jacobins, was opposed to the Instruction intrinsically, but was willing to adopt it as a simple memorandum if thereby the departure of the commissioners might be hastened. On the other hand, those who had usually followed the lead of the four associated committees saw the hopelessness of trying to make more of the Instruction than a simple memorandum. So on June 15, the National Assembly adopted the following decree: That the Instruction be sent "to the Governor of the colony of Santo Domingo to serve as an instructional memorandum only; that the colonial assembly may, while conforming to the decrees rendered for the colonies of which it can neither stay nor suspend the execution, put provisionally into execution, with the previous sanction of the Governor, the various decrees rendered for the kingdom and whatever parts of the Instruction may be

⁵⁰ *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XXVII. 383-384.

⁵¹ *Instruction pour les Colonies françaises contenant un Projet de Constitution, présentée à l'Assemblée nationale, au Nom des Comités de Constitution, des Colonies, de la Marine, d'Agriculture et de Commerce* (Paris, 1791). 74 pages.

adaptable, on condition that everything be reported to the national legislature for approval and for the sanction of the King; that, in order to put the colonial assembly in position to exercise this liberty of choice, there will be sent to it, to serve likewise as a memorandum only, a copy of the decrees of the National Assembly."⁵² Thus the statement was repeated that the Instruction was not to be, as Barnave once said, a body of rules, positive, clear and precise, which the colonists must obey. If the colonists would obey the decree of May 15, their right to initiate constitutional and statute laws would in no way be limited.

All the troublesome questions had now been settled, and there seemed no longer any excuse for delay. The commissioners were expected to depart at once and carry to the colonies the decree of May 15, the Exposé of Motives, the Instruction of June 15, and a copy of the decrees of the National Assembly. But all these well laid plans were disarranged by an untoward occurrence. On June 21 the King fled from Paris toward the eastern frontier, and a long period of confusion followed in which a republican party was born. The colonial deputies forthwith returned to their seats in the National Assembly,⁵³ and there was still a prospect that the departure of the commissioners might be delayed until tidings of disaster could come from the colonies.⁵⁴

⁵² *Procès-verbal*, no. 681, p. 6.

⁵³ *Moniteur* (23 juin 1791), 622 [722]. *Correspondance inédite du Constituant Thibaudeau* (1789-1791), 146. Publiée par Henri Carré et P. Boissonnade (Paris. 1898).

⁵⁴ *Garran, op. cit.*, II. 273-274.

CHAPTER VI.

DECISION OF THE MULATO QUESTION REVERSED.

For two months after the flight to Varennes the radical Jacobins were occupied with the question of the King's trial and left the colonial question in obedience. But on August 22 the following letter came from the Governor of Santo Domingo: "A ship which arrived from Nantes on June 30 brought several letters¹ telling us of the decree adopted by the National Assembly at the sessions of May 13 and 15, which admits the colored people to the parochial and colonial [electoral] assemblies. I would that I might leave you ignorant of the sensation made, and of the rapidity with which the news spread to all parts of the colony * * * This decree is a formal breach of the promise made in the preamble of the decree of October 12 * * * The most loyal hearts are estranged, and the most frightful civil war or the loss of the colony to France may well be the result of the present excitement * * * The first part of the decree relative to slaves and simple freedmen gives no assurance whatever in regard to property. It is regarded only as a provision which a subsequent decree may abrogate, just as it has annulled the promise of October 12. Thus (and this is the greatest misfortune of all) the confidence of the colonists in the National Assembly is destroyed.

"The same letters say that England has a fleet of forty-five sail in the West Indian waters, and my pen refuses to report the speeches, perhaps the prayers, to which this circumstance has given birth. The provincial assembly meets tomorrow, I am told, to take

¹ Letters from the colonial deputies and other colonists at Paris, of course. See *ante*, p. 105.

action.² What resolution it may adopt I can not predict. I know its patriotism from experience. And the National Assembly has already seen its principles regarding the mulattoes from its address of last July.³ Those principles remain unchanged. Yet it is difficult to keep this decree, now so public, from the knowledge of the mulattoes. If they move, all is lost.

"So you see, Monsieur, my predicament. It is not my province to comment on decrees; my duty is to enforce them. But I am resolved to pour out the last drop of my blood rather than spill that of my fellow citizens and brothers. I pray Heaven that the retirement of the colonial deputies from the National Assembly, and the remonstrances of commerce may bring about the withdrawal of the fatal decree. I wish that the National Assembly would at least condescend to interpret it * * * It provides only for the admission of the mulattoes to the electoral assemblies, and the whites are determined to keep that privilege for themselves alone. But the mulattoes are going to demand, as a consequence of the decree, admission to all official positions * * * I shall do my best to keep the peace, or rather to prevent the shedding of blood. But you see from the condition of the colony how feeble my efforts are going to be. It is inevitable that all the whites will unite into a single party opposed to the execution of the decree. In a word, Monsieur, I have reason to fear that this decree, if it is not at least modified, will prove the death warrant of many thousand men, including those very persons who are the objects of its solicitude."⁴

Thus the first tidings from the colonies did indeed announce the fulfillment of the prophecy so frequently uttered by the opponents

² The Governor is writing this letter at Cap Français.

³ See *ante*, pp. 65-69.

⁴ Reprinted in *Archives parlementaires*, XXIX. 623-624. Cf. *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XXXII. 157-159. *Moniteur* (23 août 1791), 972. Cf. Stoddard, *op. cit.*, 124-125-.

of the decree, and the radical Jacobins were thoroughly angry. They declared that a counter revolution fomented by colonists in France was raging in Santo Domingo, and demanded that the Governor's letter be referred to the committee appointed for the investigation of treason and crime, and demanded that an investigation be made to ascertain why the orders of the National Assembly in regard to the execution of the decree of May 15 had not been promptly carried out.⁵ "We are betrayed," said Rewbell; and the debate grew so tumultuous that the President put on his hat as a sign that he was no longer able to keep order. Finally, however, Moreau de Saint-Méry obtained the floor and produced another letter, dated July 5, which said: "The assembly of the Northern Province, at the session of July 4, listened to the reading of several addresses sent to the colony by the département of the Gironde. The discussion bore upon the prompt formation of a general colonial assembly. The provincial assembly issued a call for an immediate election of deputies to a general assembly to meet at Léogane * * * * The same invitation was sent to the other two provinces of the colony. The citizens here at Cap Français are all united for the common cause. Since the arrival of the decree of May 15, opinions are no longer divided. We are sure that the two other provinces are of the same mind as ourselves. The Governor communicated to the provincial assembly his letter to the Minister of Marine⁶ at the session of yesterday. The reading was interrupted at intervals by lively applause. It has done much to restore peace here, because we believe it will produce a salutary effect in France and re-enforce the demands of our provincial assembly."⁷

⁵ *Journal des États-généraux*, XXXII. 159-162.

⁶ This is the letter read to the National Assembly on August 22, and just quoted above.

When Moreau de Saint-Méry had finished reading, Tracy said: While the committee on colonies and the Minister of Marine were malingering, public enemies have aroused the spirit of disobedience in our colonies. I move that several new members favorable to the execution of the decree of May 15 be added to the committee and that the committee thus re-enforced be ordered to give an account of the steps so far taken to carry out instructions of the National Assembly.⁸ Rewbell proposed as an amendment that the Minister of Marine be summoned to the bar. Accordingly, the National Assembly decreed that the Minister should appear at the bar and give reasons for his negligence, that six new members be added to the committee on colonies, and that the letter of the Governor be referred to the committee thus re-enforced.⁹

On August 23, the Minister obeyed the summons and in substance said: The commissioners for Santo Domingo were appointed at the end of March and were given all the documents relative to the troubles in that colony. Then the decrees of May 13 and 15 were adopted, and on May 29 an Exposé of Motives followed. The Exposé in turn mentioned the Instruction, and I understood that the commissioners were to wait for that also. The measures which I have taken for the execution of the decrees are as follows: A frigate at Brest to transport the commissioners to Santo Domingo, a ship at Lorient to transport the commissioners to French Guiana, and an advice-boat at Lorient to carry the decrees, the Exposé and the Instruction to Martinique, Tobago, and Guadeloupe. These vessels have been ready for several months. On June 8, I wrote to the committee on colonies and urged haste. Finally the Instruction was ready on June 15, but it was not submitted to me until July 25. On the very next day, the three commissioners for

⁷ *Journal des États-généraux*, XXXII. 163.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 164-165.

⁹ *Procès-verbal*, no. 743, pp. 8-9.

Santo Domingo resigned,¹⁰ and it was only last week that three others could be appointed to take their places and be sent to Brest. So soon as the Instruction for French Guiana, and those for Guadeloupe and Tobago are submitted to me, I shall hasten the departure of the commissioners for those colonies.¹¹

The explanation had about it the ring of sincerity and satisfied the National Assembly as regarded the good intentions of the Minister. The blame was now placed squarely on the shoulders of the four associated committees. Seeing this, Barnave, who had kept discreetly silent about colonial affairs since May 15, felt constrained to make the following defense: For four months I labored on a constitution for the colonies. When the task was finished, the four associated committees thought it advisable to propose to you the preliminary decree which you rejected. As the decree which you adopted in its place contravened the spirit of my colonial policy, I believed in the intimacy of my soul that I could be of no further service. So I ceased to attend the meetings of the associated committees (On the Extreme Left: *Il fallait le dire. —Murmures.*) I offered to resign but the other members of the committees begged me to remain, saying that, as reporter of the committee on colonies, my influence in the colonies was great and that my resignation, if made public, would certainly encourage opposition to the execution of the decree. Accordingly, I remained on the committee but took no part in its deliberations. And my conduct has been imitated by others, thus leaving to those who have faith in the decree a free hand to provide for its execution. There is no doubt that the colonies are full of rage and indignation.

¹⁰ Ils ont écrit qu'ils ne croyaient pas partir dans l'état où était le Roi; qu'en conséquence ils demandaient que l'on suspendit ou que l'on acceptât leur destitution.—*Journal des États-généraux*, XXXIII. 276. Cf. *Procès-verbal*, no. 761, pp. 3-4.

¹¹ *Procès-verbal*, no. 744. 23-24.

"Now, I declare to the National Assembly that if it does not take the wisest precautions relative to the decree of May 15, relative to the disturbances which are certain to follow, we shall, in all seriousness, lose our most beautiful and most prosperous colony (Murmurs). It is always much better to be wise before the event, to apply remedies while yet there is time, than to purchase passing and perfidious flatteries at the price of the real disasters which follow." You can not trace the troubles to incendiary letters sent from France nor to any criminal negligence of the committee on colonies. The troubles have been caused by the decree itself. I told you during the five days' debate in May that the execution of this decree was impossible. "Now that my prophecy has been fulfilled, it behooves me to enlighten public opinion and yours, and I shall do so with courage." The time has come to proceed to business. The four associated committees need to meet at once and prescribe remedies for the colonial ills.¹² To this speech Louis Monneron and La Rochefoucauld, both radical Jacobins, made brief replies. Then the National Assembly added to the committee on colonies the following members: Louis Monneron, La Rochefoucauld, Tracy, Brostaret, Castelanet, and Perisse du Luc.¹³ These deputies were all known to be favorable to the execution of the decree of May 15, and were expected to counterbalance the influence of the disaffected members of the committee.

But there was beginning now to be a reaction against the colonial policy of the radical Jacobins. On August 25, a petition was received from thirty-six "merchant citizens" of Nantes for the revocation of the decree. "The planters," said the petition,

¹² *Journal des États-généraux*, XXXII. 219-223. *Moniteur* (25 août 1791), 979-980.

¹³ *Procès-verbal*, no. 744, pp. 25-26; no. 746, p. 1. Louis Monneron had been added to this committee once before. See *ante*, p. 85.

"were calmly and confidently awaiting the constitutional code promised by the decree of March 8 and that of October 12; they were calling for the commissioners whom you had promised to send them as guarantees of peace * * * Suddenly, gentlemen, instead of the fulfillment of their desires, a ship touches at Cap Français with the decree of May 15. Instantly the national colors, those signs of liberty to which all citizens rally, are trodden under foot; resolutions of despair succeed tranquil deliberations; war within and without succeeds the arts of peace. Blood is ready to flow, and the mulattoes are going to be the first victims immolated to the fury of the colonists. To contemplate this sad picture is too distressing for tender hearts. * * * Hasten to inform the colonists that you will suspend the execution of a decree which is certain to cause their ruin and ours."¹⁴ Frequent calls for "the order of the day" interrupted the reading of this petition, but no discussion followed. The National Assembly referred the document to the committee on colonies with orders to make a report on August 29.¹⁵

Sentiment inside the National Assembly was now rapidly changing; the colonial policy of the Left Center was again in the ascendant. On August 28, it was decreed that the commissioners at Brest should remain in France and await further orders.¹⁶ And on August 29, instead of the expected report on the colonies, Tracy, Castelanet, Perisse du Luc and La Rochefoucauld announced that, finding the atmosphere (figuratively speaking) of the committee room uncomfortable, they would attend the meetings of the committee no more.¹⁷ The radical Jacobins denounced

¹⁴ *Journal des États-généraux*, XXXII. 259, 261.

¹⁵ *Procès-verbal*, no 746, p. 7.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, no. 749, p. 10.

¹⁷ *Journal des États-généraux*, XXXII. 435 et seq.

the committee for its overbearing conduct, and demanded that it be renewed either wholly or in part; but nothing came of their demand. The National Assembly adjourned for the day without deciding anything relative to the colonies.

From this time on, the National Assembly was frequently importuned. On August 31, a Secretary read another letter from the Governor of Santo Domingo and three pamphlets issued by the provincial assembly at Cap Français. They were all of the same tenor: the decree must be either modified or suspended. Next was read an address, endorsed by six pages of signatures, from the merchants of Bordeaux, which warned the National Assembly that any attempt to execute the decree would entail the destruction of the Commerce and manufactures of France. Then followed another from the administrators of the département of the Gironde, which declared that all complaints concerning the decree could be traced to offended pride and pecuniary interests, that the decree had been well received by most of the colonists, and that the municipality of Bordeaux was going to punish those merchants who had recently petitioned the National Assembly to suspend the execution of the decree. Then Bégouen read an address, endorsed by seven or eight pages of signatures, from the merchants and ship owners of Havre, who, like the merchants of Bordeaux, demanded the repeal or modification of the decree. This address was even supported by the Jacobin Club of Havre, which expressed fears that the colonies might secede and give themselves to England. Then Louis Monneron read a letter from a certain M. Bourbon of Bordeaux who said that those opposed to the execution of the decree were enemies of the Revolution and that he had heard that the rich parish of Croix-des-Bouquets and many others had found the decree satisfactory. At length, when all these documents had been read, the National Assembly re-

ferred them to the committee on colonies and adjourned for the day.¹⁸

On September 3, "the citizens of the city of Havre," having learned that the merchants of that city had petitioned the National Assembly to repeal the decree, sent a counter petition for the execution of the decree. The merchants and ship owners, said "the citizens," are interested in the slave trade.¹⁹

On September 5, the monotony was varied by a criticism more scathing than usual, of the committee on colonies. Two individuals calling themselves "députés extraordinaires of the city of Brest" appeared at the bar, and one of them said: "If the decree of May 15 has not been well received in the colonies, it is because those who are expected to execute the law are fomenting trouble. This is not a rash statement. Five months ago we submitted to the committee on colonies more than eighty manuscript documents which prove this statement beyond the shadow of a doubt. But these documents have not been examined at all, nor has the petition from Brest, referred to this committee, been examined. We wrote twice to M. Barnave, but he made no reply. We urged him to glance at these documents, but he manifested the coldest indifference. We then wrote to the President of the National Assembly, who ordered the members of the committee to meet, but this order was as useless as were our remonstrances. * * * We shall dwell no longer on the conduct of this committee. You doubtless recall that the members added to it were constrained to resign. They have not yet been replaced. * * * We petition the National Assembly to order the committee on colonies to make a report on the petition from the citizens of Brest."²⁰

¹⁸ *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XXXIII. 45-55. *Procès-verbal*, no. 752, pp. 8-10.

¹⁹ *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XXXIII. 135-136.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 185-186.

The tone and content of this petition aroused the wrath of Alexandre Lameth, who said in substance: The troubles in the colonies have not been caused by the committee, but by the decree itself. Whoever dares deny this is treasonable to truth. Cries and interruptions do not respond to facts. The decree can be executed only at the point of the bayonet. Those who are responsible for the adoption of the decree are responsible for the troubles.²¹ To these assertions, Robespierre said in reply: "If to be understood, it is necessary to use personalities, I say to you that those who are permitted to arouse suspicions concerning both the decree of May 15 and the deputation from Brest—I say to you that those are the men who are traitors to the country (Loud applause on the Extreme Left and in the galleries) * * * I say to you that the traitors to the country are those who desire the repeal of your decree; and, if to be understood in this Assembly, I must needs call individual names, I name M. Barnave and M. Lameth" (Vociferous applause on the Extreme Left and in the galleries. On the Left Center: *A l'Abbaye, à l'Abbaye M. Robespierre*. Barnave rushes to the tribune and demands a hearing). If the National Assembly will fix a day, continued Robespierre, I shall offer evidence to prove that the committee on colonies is guilty of treason.²² Then Barnave said: Let an investigation be made. I defy M. Robespierre. The troubles in the colonies have been caused by the Jacobin Club at Brest which these petitioners represent, and by incendiary letters written by Abbé Grégoire and other anarchists. This scandalous scene today has been staged and the galleries packed by Brissot de Warville and others who are now standing for election in Paris and hope to win votes by a sensational demonstration. The radical Jacobins have no knowledge of conditions in the colonies and no interest in the commercial prosperity of

²¹ *Ibid.*, 186-188.

²² *Ibid.*, 189-191. Cf. *Moniteur* (8 septembre 1791), 1044-1045.

France. I demand that the addresses from Rouen, Rennes and Harfleur be read to the National Assembly.²³ Another deputy suggested that the petition of "the deputies extraordinary of the city of Brest," which had caused this stormy debate, be handed back to its bearers as a mark of supreme contempt; but the National Assembly, without deciding anything, passed to "the order of the day." The discussion had served only to stir up bad blood once more on both sides.

On September 7, the three addresses mentioned by Barnave were read,²⁴ and a noisy debate followed. "M. Barnave, who has been so conspicuous today," said Lanjuinais, "seeks and obtains the reading of these addresses, but he does not read addresses opposed to the repeal of the decree." Rewbell: "We have, up to the present, listened to various addresses ground out by the same mill--addresses prepared, drafted and signed right here in Paris before the decree was even adopted." Barnave: "You are densely ignorant of the colonies." Rewbell: "Those who have played the principal rôle in the committee on colonies have been to the colonies no oftener than I have. I ask M. de Curt, if he is present, to confess that he has frequently said that, if the decree had admitted the mulattoes only to the parochial [electoral] assemblies, there would never have been any difficulty. It is then an affair of vanity, of pride, and nothing more (Applause) * * * It is evident that they are playing a game. I have been assured on good authority that the mulattoes born of free parents can not have the preponderance in the [electoral] assemblies, because out of one hundred mulattoes there are not perhaps two who can prove that they are born of free parents. * * * Besides, it is not your business to repeal the decree, even if it ought to be repealed. So I move that the question be adjourned till the meeting of the next legisla-

²³ *Journal des Etats-généraux*, XXXIII. 192-195.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 232-237.

ture,"²⁵—which, as everyone could foresee, was going to be radically Jacobin. Then Barnave replied: The life of a great colonial population is endangered by the admission to political rights of four or five hundred, or perhaps a thousand, persons. We must repeal this decree before the National Assembly dissolves, or else our colonies are lost. I move that the committee on colonies be instructed to make a report within ten days on the decree of May 15. And his motion was adopted.²⁶ Thus the question of the repeal was at last in the "order of the day."

In the meanwhile, the four associated committees, under the presidency of Bégouen, made out a list of all the addresses and other expressions of opinion which were favorable to the execution of the decree, and a list of all those which were unfavorable. The result showed that, whereas four or five addresses endorsed by a score of signatures demanded the execution of the decree, thirty-six endorsed by about two thousand signatures declared the execution either impossible or dangerous. The maritime and commercial cities of France, the assembly of Cap Français, the Governor of Santo Domingo, the cities of Port-au-Prince, Léogane, and Les Cayes were all shown to be opposed to the decree. The two lists giving these facts were published in pamphlet form and distributed at the domicile of each member of the National Assembly.²⁷ Thus the way was paved for the repeal of the decree.

In the report, which was made on September 23, Barnave said in substance: When the spirit of revolution reached our distant possessions, a spontaneous movement began for the destruction of the *Ancien Régime* and the formation of a representative government. The National Assembly at length had to interfere and draft

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 237-239.

²⁶ *Procès-verbal*, no. 759, pp. 14-15.

²⁷ *Délibération des Quatre Comités réunis de Constitution, de Marine, d'Agriculture & de Commerce & des Colonies*. Du 12 Septembre 1791 (Paris, s. d.).

for the colonies an Instruction. The administration of the English colonies served as a model. The English Parliament makes all the laws of the exterior régime, that is, the laws which concern the maritime commerce and the military defense of the colonies; but a legislative assembly in each colony makes the laws of the interior régime, and these laws may be enforced for a year before they are submitted to the King for sanction. Thus from one point of view, the English colonies are subject states because their laws are made for them by a legislative body in which they have no representatives; but from another point of view, they are co-ordinate states because their laws are made by themselves in their own local assemblies. The link that binds the colonies to England is the King. He appoints the colonial judges and the members of the upper houses of the colonial assemblies. If we could have found such a link in our King, we might have adopted the English system without modification; but the King of the French can not appoint judges, and there are in our colonies no upper houses. What then did we do in our Instruction? We permitted the colonies to make the laws of the interior régime and to execute them provisionally, pending the approval of the national legislature and the sanction of the King; but we kept the laws of the exterior régime entirely within the competence of the national legislature, except that in times of dearth the colonial assemblies were given the privilege of making laws relative to the introduction of food stuff and executing them provisionally, as in the case of the interior régime. The colonies, however, were given representatives in the national legislature and thus bound solidly to the mother country.

This solution of the problem the colonists found satisfactory in all points save one: they feared the national legislature might not refrain from making laws relative to the status of persons in the

colonies. Accordingly, the colonies were given a solemn promise in this regard. "This promise repeated in several decrees was the basis of our system. At the beginning of last May, the committee proposed to convert it into a constitutional decree. * * * You remember what the result was: how adopting our recommendation upon one point, that is, slavery, you rejected it upon the other, and adopted against our advice the decree of May 15. Thereafter the policy which we proposed and which, after so many troubles and misfortunes, would have terminated all the colonial dissensions, could not be put into effect. The second Instruction was not converted into a formal decree, as we desired; but was sent to the colonies as a simple memorandum." This breach of faith has destroyed the confidence of the colonies in the National Assembly. Fearing that another decree will free their slaves, they have all joined the party of the assembly of Saint Marc and adopted for their party platform the "Constitutional Bases" of May 28. They are all determined now to make all the laws of the interior régime and execute them with no other sanction than that of the King; and they are determined that the laws of the exterior régime shall not be enforced in the colonies until the colonial assemblies have given their consent thereto. This change in the attitude of the colonists has necessitated a corresponding change in our manner of dealing with the problem. We must adopt compromise measures. We must declare positively, on the one hand, that the laws of the exterior régime shall remain entirely within the competence of the national legislature; but, on the other, we must repeal the decree of May 15 and permit the colonies to make all laws relative to the status of persons and execute them provisionally under the direct sanction of the King. Therefore your committee recommends the adoption of the following decree:

"The National Assembly wishing, before terminating its work, to guarantee positively the internal peace of the colonies and the

advantages which France derives from these important possessions, decrees the following constitutional articles :

Art. I.—The national legislative assembly will have the exclusive right, under the sanction of the King, to make the laws of the exterior régime of the colonies. In consequence, it will make (1) the laws concerning the commercial relations of the colonies, the provisions for the enforcement of these laws by means of surveillance, prosecution, judgment and punishment of contraventions, and the laws which guarantee the engagements between the French merchants and the inhabitants of the colonies ; (2) the laws concerning the defense of the colonies, that is, concerning the military and administrative provisions for war by land and sea.

Art. II.—The colonial assemblies can make upon these subjects demands and representations ; but these will be considered only as simple petitions and can not be converted in the colonies into provisional laws, except that in times of pressing need a resolution of a colonial assembly, when approved by the Governor, may open the ports temporarily and extraordinarily for the introduction of food stuff.

Art. III.—The laws concerning the status of persons not free and the political status of mulattoes and free blacks as well as the regulations for the execution of these laws, shall be made by the colonial assemblies and executed provisionally, with the sanction of the Governors of the colonies, pending the direct sanction of the King ; and no previous decree can hinder the full exercise of the right conferred on the colonial assemblies by the present decree.

Art. IV.—As to the formalities to be followed in making the laws of the interior régime which concern the status of persons designated in the above article, they shall be determined by the national legislative power, as well as the rest of the organization of

the colonies, after having received the will which the colonial assemblies have been authorized to express relative to their constitutions.

"I observe, gentlemen," said Barnave in conclusion, "that though the National Assembly has finished its work on the Constitution and can make no change in that, yet it can still enact constitutional laws in regard to the colonies, because the decree of March 8, 1790, declares distinctly that the colonies are not comprehended in the constitution drafted for the kingdom."²⁸

When Barnave had finished, a long, tiresome discussion followed in which the old arguments were repeated in all their fullness of detail. At the close of the day's session, a motion to lay the report on the table and leave the colonial problem for the Legislative Assembly to solve was defeated by a vote of 191 to 307.²⁹ So the discussion was resumed on the following day and, though substitutes and amendments were offered, the decree as proposed by Barnave was adopted. The third article was slightly amended, but its original meaning remained unchanged.³⁰

Thus ended the work of the Constituent Assembly in regard to the French colonies in the West Indies. The original grievances of the colonists had been attributed to arbitrary government, color distinctions, and the navigation laws. How to redress these grievances in accordance with the principles of the Revolution and preserve at the same time the colonial prosperity of France was the problem to be solved. The task was undertaken by the Left Center, that group of deputies which more nearly than any other directed the entire work of the Constituent Assembly. The policy was outlined in the decree of March 8, 1790, and, except for one brief period when the Extreme Left seized control, was

²⁸ *Journal des États-généraux*, XXXIV. 226-244.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 254. *Procès-verbal*, no. 775, pp. 21-23.

³⁰ *Procès-verbal*, no. 776, pp. 15-20.

consistently followed. Arbitrary government was abolished as a matter of course and the people were instructed to elect their own representatives, but who exactly should have the right to vote was not made clear. The committee on colonies determined to leave the decision of that question to the colonists themselves, which was tantamount in the last analysis to enfranchisement of the white planters only. Advocates of the strict interpretation of the Declaration of the Rights of Man insisted that the suffrage be granted specifically to the mulattoes but failed in the end to obtain their desires. Color distinctions were not abolished. Neither was slavery nor the slave trade. Modification of the navigation laws was contemplated and a plan adopted whereby the national legislature could mediate between the French merchants and the colonists, but this plan though feasible was never tried, owing to the confusion of the times. On the whole, the policy was to establish a decentralized administration for the French empire. The colonies were to enjoy local autonomy and send representatives to an imperial parliament, but the King was to sanction all laws and appoint Governors to exercise nominal authority. The colonists were not to legislate concerning matters of imperial interests, but could always express their will through petitions. To say that this plan was faulty is to judge hastily. The fault was with the French people, who were inexperienced in self-government. Moreover, the spirit of revolution was in the air and nothing short of absolute liberty and equality would satisfy the radicals who sat in the Legislative Assembly and the Convention. The mulattoes were consequently enfranchised by the Legislative Assembly and the slaves freed by the Convention. Then the blacks in Santo Domingo exterminated the whites and established the independent State of Haiti. The fact that the other colonies of the West Indies were not lost in the same way was due probably to their small servile population.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The principal sources for this study in parliamentary history are the official minutes of the National Assembly which were published from day to day, the reports of committees published by order of the National Assembly, the newspaper reports of the debates in the National Assembly, the petitions and representations to the National Assembly published either privately or officially, the correspondence of deputies and constituents which not infrequently found its way into print, and the pamphlets, usually of a controversial nature, which appeared in great numbers. Thanks to the activity of the printing press during the period little material pertinent to the present study remains in manuscript. The minutes of the committee on colonies which would be an invaluable source of information and which M. Armand Brette claims to have seen some twenty years ago (*La Révolution française*, XXIX, 326) can not now be found, though an official search for them has recently been made. Private correspondence in manuscript is not altogether lacking, but the yield from this source promised to be so meager that it has been all but neglected.

I. MANUSCRIPTS

Archives Nationales.—Series Dxxv. 85-90. "Papers of the Massiac Club, 1789-1792." Carton 85 contains five copies of the minutes of the Club, and also private correspondence. The remaining cartons contain correspondence and extracts from the minutes of the Club. Only here and there was it possible to glean a few facts bearing on questions under consideration in the National Assembly.

II. *Official and Semi-Official Documents.*

Minutes, petitions, committee reports, official correspondence, etc.

Adresse à l'Assemblée nationale, des Citoyens de Couleur, réunis à Paris, sous le Titre de Colons américains. Du 5 juillet 1790 (*s. l. n. d.*) 16 pages. Tells how the mulattoes in France were cut off from all communication with the colonies. Signed by ten mulattoes.

Adresse à l'Assemblée nationale, pour l'Abolition de la Traite des Noirs. Par la Société des Amis des Noirs. Février 1790 (Paris, 1790). 22 pages. Printed by order of the Society. Signed by Brissot de Warville, President; Le Page, Secretary.

† *Adresse aux Amis de l'Humanité; par la Société des Amis des Noirs, sur le Plan de ses Travaux.* Lue au Comité, le 4 juin 1790, et imprimée par son ordre (Paris, *s. d.*) 4 pages. Plans for a great number of publications, and friends are asked to contribute money. Signed by Pétion de Villeneuve, President; Brissot de Warville, Secretary.

Adresse de l'Assemblée générale de la Partie française de Saint-Domingue à l'Assemblée nationale (Paris, *s. d.*). 8 pages. Privately printed. Read to the National Assembly on October 4, 1790, and denounced by Barnave as insolent.

Adresse de l'Assemblée provinciale de la Partie du Nord de Saint-Domingue, à l'Assemblée nationale (Paris, 1790). 23 pages. Read to the National Assembly on September 4, 1790, by Gouy d'Arisy, and referred to the committee on colonies. Especially valuable as showing the sentiments of the colonists concerning the enfranchisement of the mulattoes, the emancipation of the slaves, and the navigation laws.

Adresse de la Société des Amis de Noirs, à l'Assemblée nationale, à toutes les Villes de Commerce, à toutes les Manufactures, aux

Colonies, à toutes les Sociétés des Amis de la Constitution. Printed in the *Courier de Provence*, XIV. 289-445, April 26, 1791. Signed by F. Pétion, President; J. P. Brissot, Secretary. The policy of the *Amis des Noirs* in regard to slavery, the mulattoes, the slave trade, and the navigation laws.

Adresse de la Société des Amis des Noirs, à l'Assemblée nationale, à toutes les Villes de Commerce, à toutes les Manufactures, aux Colonies, à toutes les Sociétés des Amis de la Constitution; Adresse dans laquelle on approfondit les Relations politiques et commerciales entre la Métropole et les Colonies, etc. (By Clavière. Second Edition, Paris, 10 July, 1791). Pp. xxviii, 318. Contains among other things the *Lettres de diverses Sociétés des Amis de la Constitution, qui réclament les Droits de Citoyen actif en Faveur des Hommes de Couleur des Colonies.*

Adresse de la Société des Amis des Noirs, établi à Paris (s. l. n. d.). Reprinted in *Archives parlementaires*, XII. 627-628. No evidence that this address was ever read to the National Assembly.

Adresse des Citoyens de Couleur des Isles & Colonies françaises; à l'Assemblée générale des Représentans de la Commune de Paris; prononcée, le premier février 1790, par M. de Joly, Avocat aux Conseils, l'un des Représentans de la Commune, * * * (s. l. n. d.). Pp. iii, 15. Signed by de Joly and six mulattoes. An appeal to the commune for assistance.

Adresse des Membres de l'Assemblée provinciale du Nord de Saint-Domingue, à l'Assemblée nationale, séante à Paris. (Paris, 1790). 7 pages. Printed by order of the National Assembly. Written at Cap Français, August 15, 1790. Denounces the irregular conduct of the assembly of Saint Marc.

Adresse prononcée à l'Assemblée nationale, Séance du 30 Septembre, au Soir, par les Députés des Paroisses du Port-au-Prince et de la Croix-des-Bouquets. (Paris, 1790). 48 pages.

Printed by order of the Nat. Ass. Denounces the irregular conduct of the assembly of Saint Marc.

Adresses de l'Assemblée provinciale du Nord de Saint-Dominique, du 15 juillet 1791, à l'Assemblée nationale, au Roi, aux 83 Départements, et au Directoire du Département de la Gironde, sur le Décret du 15 Mai, en Faveur des Hommes de Couleur libres des Colonies. (Paris, 1791). 29 pages.

Les Américains réunis à Paris, & ci-devant composant l'Assemblée générale de la Partie française de Saint-Domingue, à l'Assemblée nationale. (Paris, 1791). 7 pages. Printed by order of the Nat. Ass. A recantation of political heresies, signed by forty-seven of the Eighty-five who escaped from Santo Domingo on the *Léopard*. Read to the Nat. Ass. on April 25, 1791, by Bar-nave.

L'Assemblée générale de la Partie française de Saint-Dominique, aux Représentants de la Nation (Paris, 1790). 8 pages. Not read to the Nat. Ass. Privately printed and distributed.

Cahier, contenant les Plaintes, Doléances & Réclamations des Citoyens-libres & propriétaires de Couleur, des Isles & Colonies françaises. Rédigé & lu dans les assemblées des 3, 8, 12, & 22 Septembre, 1789 (*s. l. n. d.*). 15 pages. Grievances mentioned in detail. Thirty articles in the *cahier*.

Collection de Mémoires et Correspondances officielles sur l'Administration des Colonies, et notamment sur la Guiane française et hollandaise, par V. P. Malouet, ancien Administrateur des Colonies et de la Marine (Paris, An X). 5 vols. Volume IV has this sub-title: *Collection de Mémoires sur les Colonies.*

Collection des Adresses et Pétitions des Citoyens-Commerçants de la Ville de Nantes, et des Députés extraordinaires du Commerce, sur les Affaires des Colonies (Nantes, 1791). 49 pages.

Conduite de M. de Santo Domingo, Commandant le Vaisseau le Léopard, lue par lui-même à l'Assemblée nationale, le 7 Octobre 1790 (s. l. n. d.). Defends himself for superseding to command when the crew mutinied.

Copie de la Lettre écrite par MM. les Commissaires du Roi, destinés à passer à Saint-Domingue, à M. Thévenard, Ministre de la Marine, datée de Paris le 26 juillet 1791 (s. l. n. d.). 2 pages in quarto. Refusal to depart for Santo Domingo.

Copies exactes des Lettres adressées au Président de l'Assemblée nationale, par les Députés des Colonies (s. l. n. d.) 3 pages in quarto. Deputies for the West Indies give notice that they will abstain from the sessions of the Nat. Ass.

Correspondance de M. le Général avec l'Assemblée générale de la Partie française de Saint-Domingue (Bordeaux, 1790). 30 pages. Contains also extracts of official minutes.

Décret de l'Assemblée générale de la Partie française de Saint-Domingue, rendu à l'Unanimité du 28 Mai 1790 (s. l., 1790). 26 pages. Contains several extracts of the minutes of the assembly of Saint Marc.

Décrets de l'Assemblée nationale concernant les Colonies; suivis d'une Instruction pour les Isles de Saint-Domingue, la Tortue, la Gonave et l'Isle-à-Vaches. Du 8 mars 1790. (Paris, 1790). 32 pages. Printed by order of the Nat. Ass. Contains the decree of March 8, 1790, and the entire report made by Barnave on March 23, 1790.

Délibération des Quatre Comités réunis de Constitution, de Marine, d'Agriculture & de Commerce & des Colonies. Du 12 septembre 1791 (Paris, s. d.). 31 pages. Contains expressions of opinions for and against the decree of May 15, 1791.

Dépêches de M. le Comte de la Luzerne, Ministre de la Marine, aux Administrateurs de Saint-Domingue (Cap Français,

1789). 13 pages. Contains a personal letter and an official dispatch, both dated September 27, 1789. On the first page of the pamphlet are comments which point out the perfidy of the Minister.

Derniers Observations des Citoyens de Couleur des Isles et Colonies françaises. Du 27 novembre 1789 (s. l. n. d.) 19 pages. Argumentative. Privately printed.

Discours des Députés de la Municipalité de Saint-Pierre, Isle Martinique, prononcé, le 31 Juillet au Soir, à la Barre de l'Assemblée nationale, par M. Armand Decorio, l'un d'eux. (s. l. n. d.) 8 pages.

Discours prononcé à l'Assemblée nationale, le 2 Octobre 1790, au Nom de l'Assemblée générale de la Partie française de Saint-Domingue (Paris, s. d.) 34 pages. Defensive. Privately printed.

Discours prononcé à l'Assemblée nationale par les Députés de l'Assemblée provinciale de la Partie du Nord de Saint-Domingue, le 25 Novembre 1790 (Paris, 1790). 10 pages. Printed by order of the Nat. Ass. Expresses gratitude for the decree of October 12, 1790.

Extrait des Pièces justificatives à l'Appui de la Dénonciation faite à l'Assemblée nationale du Comte de la Luzerne, Ministre d'Etat & de la Marine, par le Comte de Gouy, Député de Saint-Domingue, au Nom de la Députation & de ses Commettans (s. l. n. d.). 141 pages. References to conditions in Santo Domingo before 1789.

Extrait des Procès-verbaux de l'Assemblée nationale, relativement à l'Etat des Personnes dans les Colonies. Sub-title: *Exposé des Motifs des Décrets des 13 & 15 Mai, sur l'Etat des Personnes dans les Colonies* (Paris, 1791). 12 pages. Drafted by Dupont de Nemours, and revised, to accompany the decrees of May 13 and 15, 1791. Printed by order of the Nat. Ass.

Extrait des Registres de Délibérations de la Commune de la Ville Saint-Pierre, Isle Martinique, du Dimanche 18 Avril (s. l. n. d.). 4 pages in quarto. Instructions given to MM. Ruste and Decorio, deputies for Saint-Pierre "auprès de l'Assemblée nationale."

Extrait des Registres de la Députation de Saint-Domingue. Séance du 21 Décembre 1789 (Paris, 1789). 23 pages. Minutes of a joint meeting of all the deputies from the West Indies.

Extrait du Procès-verbal de l'Assemblée des Citoyens—libres et propriétaires de Couleur des Isles et Colonies françaises, constituée sous le Titre de Colons américains. Du 12 Septembre 1789 (Paris, 1789). 16 pages. Privately printed. Beginning of the efforts made by the mulattoes to obtain a recognition of their rights as active citizens. Signed by de Joly, President; Rolland-Audiger and Poizat, Secretaries.

Extrait du Procès-verbal de l'Assemblée des Colons américains. Du 22 Septembre 1789 (s. l. n. d.) 1 page. Signed by de Joly, President; Rolland-Audiger and Poizat, Secretaries. Agree to offer the state one-fourth of their revenues, estimated at 6,000,000, as a patriotic gift.

Extrait du Procès-verbal de l'Assemblée générale des Citoyens libres-de-Couleur, des Isles & Colonies françaises, constituée sous le Titre de Colons américains. Du 31 Octobre 1789 (s. l. n. d.). 19 pages. Signed as above.

Extrait du Registre des Délibérations de la Chambre du Commerce de la Ville de Bordeaux; et Adresses du Directoire du Département de la Gironde à l'Assemblée nationale; de la Société des Amis de la Constitution; du Club du Café national de la Ville de Bordeaux, à l'Assemblée nationale; relatifs au Décret rendu par elle le 14 [sic] Mai 1791, au Sujet des Colonies (Paris, 1791).

20 pages. Printed by order of the Nat. Ass. Urges the enforcement of the decree of May 15, 1791.

Extrait logographique de la Séance des Amis de la Constitution de Paris, du Vendredi 10 Juin 1791 (Paris, s. d.). 16 pages. In a stormy session, Gouy d'Arsy defends himself for abstaining from the sessions of the National Assembly.

Instruction pour les Colonies françaises contenant un Projet de Constitution, présentée à l'Assemblée nationale, au Nom des Comités de Constitution, des Colonies, de la Marine, d'Agriculture et de Commerce (Paris, 1791). 74 pages. Barnave and the committee on colonies spent four months drafting this Instruction. Read to the Nat. Ass. on June 14, 1791, by Defermon. Printed by order of the Nat. Ass.

Instruction pour les Colonies, présentée à l'Assemblée nationale, au Nom du Comité chargé de ce Travail, le 23 Mars 1790. Par M. Barnave, Député du Dauphiné (Paris, s. d.). 28 pages. Printed by order of the Nat. Ass. Outline of the policy of the committee on colonies.

Instructions de l'Assemblée générale coloniale de la Guadeloupe à ses Députés de l'Assemblée nationale. Arrêté en l'Assemblée générale coloniale le 22 Mars 1790. Reprinted in *Archives parlementaires*, VI. 235. Shows attitude of the planters of Guadeloupe toward the mulatto question.

Lettre bien importante de la Chambre d'Agriculture de Saint-Domingue, adressée aux Membres du Comité colonial, séant à Paris (s. l. n. d.) 16 pages. Privately printed. Contains a demand that the Administrators of Santo Domingo grant the colonists permission to elect deputies to the Estates General. Sent from Cap Français, December 10, 1788.

Lettre de l'Assemblée provinciale de la Partie du Nord de Saint-Domingue, à Messieurs du Comités de l'Ouest et du Sud,

sur le Projet d'Ordonnance pour la Convocation d'une Assemblée générale de la Colonie, adressé par le Comte de la Luzerne, Ministre de la Marine, aux Administrateurs, au Cap le 24 Décembre 1789 (s. l., 1790). 33 pages. Signed by Larchevesque-Thibaud, Vice-President, and d'Augy. Points out the perfidy of the Minister of Marine.

Lettre de M. de Gouy, Député de Saint-Domingue, à l'Assemblée nationale (Paris, August 23, 1791). 7 pages. Reply to a denunciation of a letter attributed to him.

Lettre de MM. de Gouy et de Reynaud, à l'Assemblée nationale, à l'Occasion de l'Evasion du Roi et de la Famille royale (Paris, 1791).

Lettre des Citoyens de Couleur, à M. le Président de l'Assemblée nationale. Du Premier Août 1790 (Paris, s. d.). 3 pages. Disapproves of the decree of May 28, adopted by the assembly of Saint Marc. Not read in the Nat. Ass. x

Lettre des Citoyens de Couleur, des Isles et Colonies françaises, à MM. les Membres du Comité de Vérification de l'Assemblée nationale. Du 23 Novembre 1789 (Paris, s. d.). 24 pages. Considers that, if the election of the white deputies was valid, the election of the mulatto deputies was also valid.

Lettre des Commissaires de la Colonie de Saint-Domingue, à MM. les Notables (s. l. n. d.). 7 pages. Relative to a colonial representation in the Estates General.

Lettre des Commissaires de la Colonie de Saint-Domingue, au Roi (Paris, s. d.). 8 pages. Petition for a colonial representation in the Estates General. Signed by nine colonial proprietors, or commissioners. Submitted to the Minister of Marine on September 4, 1788.

Lettre des Députés de la Province du Nord de Saint-Domingue, à Messieurs les Citoyens des Districts du Port-au-Prince; v

imprimée par ordre de l'Assemblée nationale. Séance du 13 October, 1790 (Paris, s. d.). 6 pages.

Lettre des Députés de Saint-Domingue à ses Commettans, en Date du 12 Août 1789 (Paris, 1790). 8 pages. Reflects the alarm of the colonial deputies in regard to the course of the Revolution. Published by the colonial deputation only after Mirabeau and Raymond had published it.

*Lettre du Comité colonial de France, au Comité colonial de Saint-Domingue; * * ** (Paris, 1788). 135 pages. Traces in detail the first efforts of the colonists to obtain a representation in the Estates General. Signed by Gouy d'Arsy and eight other proprietors. Probably sent to Santo Domingo as a pamphlet.

✓ *Lettre du Citoyen Larchevesque-Thibaud, ancien Procureur de la Commune du Cap Français, aux Comités de Marine & des Colonies de la Convention nationale, réunis* (Paris, 1793). 82 pages. Defends his political career after 1788. Interesting references to colonial conditions.

Lettre écrite à M. le Comte de Peynier, Général de Saint-Domingue, par l'Assemblée provinciale de la Partie du Nord (Cap Français, 1789). 5 pages. Signed by Bacon de la Chevalerie, President. Read to the Nat. Ass. on March 2, 1790.

Lettre écrite par MM. les Députés extraordinaires de l'Assemblée provinciale du Nord de Saint-Domingue, à MM. les Colons réunis à l'Hôtel de Massiac (Paris, 1791). 7 pages in folio.

*Liste des Propriétaires de Biens situés dans les Colonies, * * ** (Paris, s. d.). 48 pages in quarto. Official list of colonists who certify that they have resided continuously in France from May 9, 1792, to 15 Thermidor of the Year Four. Names arranged in alphabetical order.

Mémoire envoyé le 18 Juin 1790, au Comité des Rapports de l'Assemblée nationale, par M. de la Luzerne, Ministre & Secrétaire d'Etat (Paris, 1790). 117 pages in quarto. References to colonies before 1789.

Mémoire instructif, adressé aux Notables, sur le Régime et l'Importance de la Colonie de Saint-Domingue (s. l. n. d.) 47 pages. Argument in favor of a colonial representation in the Estates General. Signed by Gouy d'Arsy and eight others.

*Mémoire sur les Causes des Troubles et des Désastres de la Colonie de Saint Domingue, présenté aux Comités de Marine et des Colonies, dans les premiers Jours de Juin dernier, par les Citoyens de Couleur; * * ** (Paris, 1793). 66 pages. Written by Julien Raymond, a mulatto. Traces the troubles to race prejudice. Partisan.

Motion de M. de Curt, Député de la Guadeloupe, au Nom des Colonies réunis (Paris, 1789). 15 pages. First motion made for the appointment of a committee to deal with the colonies, November 26, 1789.

*Pétition nouvelle des Citoyens de Couleur des Iles françaises à l'Assemblée nationale; * * ** (Paris, 1791). Pp. xii, 19. Explains that whites have schemed to defeat the efforts of mulattoes. Not read to National Assembly. Privately published. Dated March 18, 1791.

Pièces justificatives des Faits énoncés dans le Mémoire de M. le Comte de la Luzerne, Ministre et Secrétaire d'Etat de la Marine (Paris, 1790). 84 pages in quarto. References to colonies before 1789.

Précis remis par M. le Marquis de Gouy d'Arsy, aux Commissaires auxquels l'Assemblée nationale a renvoyé l'Examen de la Demande faite par les Représentans de la Colonie, pour obtenir

provisoirement la Liberté de se procurer des Farines, dont elle manque absolument (Versailles, s. d.). 12 pages.

Précis sur la Position actuelle de la Députation de Saint-Domingue, aux Etats-généraux (Versailles, 1789). Argument for a colonial representation in Estates General.

*Première Dénonciation solennelle d'un Ministre faite à l'Assemblée nationale, en la Personne du Comte de La Luzerne, Ministre d'Etat, de la Marine, et des Colonies; par le Comte de Gouy, * * ** (Paris, 1790). 166 Pages. Privately printed. References to conditions in Santo Domingo before 1789.

Projet d'Instructions à remettre aux Députés de Saint-Domingue, rédigé par leurs Commettans (s. l., 1789). 12 pages. Claims that, since the colony is not a part of France, it must be considered a Franco-American province. This *projet* looks like a fabrication, perhaps drafted by Gouy d'Arsy in Paris.

Procès-verbal de l'Assemblée nationale (A Paris, chez Baudouin, Imprimeur de l'Assemblée nationale, rue du Foin-St.-Jacques, No. 31. 1789-1791). 782 numbers. These official minutes were written by the Secretaries. Each number was read to the National Assembly and the errors were corrected. Brief but reliable.

Procès-verbal des Séances des Députés des Communes, depuis le 12 Juin 1789 jusqu'au 17 Juin, Jour de la Constitution en Assemblée nationale (Paris, chez Baudouin, 1789). 104 pages. Official and reliable.

Rapport fait à l'Assemblée coloniale de la Guadeloupe, le 10 Novembre 1790, au Nom de la Députation envoyée à la Martinique pour y établir la Paix (Paris, s. d.). 90 pages. Excellent and trustworthy account of the Revolution in Martinique from October, 1789, to October, 1790.

Rapport fait à l'Assemblée nationale, au Nom du Comité des Colonies, concernant les Troubles arrivés à la Guadeloupe; (Paris 1792). 69 pages. References to early part of the Revolution in Guadeloupe.

*Rapport fait à l'Assemblée nationale, au Nom du Comité colonial, sur les Troubles de la Martinique; par P. Gonyon, * * ** le 2 Mai 1792 (Paris, 1792). 133 pages. Excellent account of early troubles.

Rapport fait à l'Assemblée nationale, le 8 Mars 1790, au Nom du Comité des Colonies, par M. Barnave, Député du Dauphiné (Paris, 1790). 22 pages. Outline of the policy adopted by the committee on colonies. Printed by order of the National Assembly.

Rapport fait à l'Assemblée nationale, sur les Colonies, au Nom des Comités de Constitution, de Marine, d'Agriculture et de Commerce & des Colonies, le 23 Septembre 1791, par M. Barnave (Paris, 1791). 12 pages. This report, though official, is only a reprint of part of the account given in *Journal des États-généraux*, XXXIV. 226-244.

Rapport fait au Nom de la Section du Comité d'Agriculture et de Commerce chargée par l'Assemblée nationale de l'Examen de la Réclamation des Députés de Saint-Domingue, relative à l'Approvisionnement de l'Isle. Par M. Gillett de la Jaqueminière (Paris, 1789). 56 pages. Not read to the National Assembly.

Rapport fait au Nom des Comités réunis de Constitution, de la Marine, d'Agriculture et de Commerce, & des Colonies, à la Séance du 7 Mai 1791; sur les Colonies. Par M. de Lattre, Député du Département de la Somme (Paris, 1791). 11 pages. Printed by order of the National Assembly.

Rapport sur les Affaires de Saint-Domingue, fait à l'Assemblée nationale, au Nom du Comité des Colonies, les 11 & 12

October, 1790. Par M. Barnave (Paris, 1790). 103 pages. Printed by order of the National Assembly.

✕ *Rapport sur les Troubles de Saint-Domingue, fait au Nom de la Commission des Colonies, des Comités de Salut public, de Législation et de Marine, réunis*, par J. Ph. Garran, * * * (Paris, An VI), 4 vols. First two volumes deal with events of the years 1789-1791. Printed by order of the National Convention. Valuable source.

Récit des Séances des Députés des Communes depuis le 5 Mai 1789 jusqu'au 12 Juin suivant. Réimpression avec un Avertissement par F.-A. Aulard (Paris, 1895). Pp. iv, 119. These minutes were compiled, by order of the National Assembly, from notes made by individual members. Valuable.

*Réclamation des Citoyens de Couleur des Isles & Colonies françaises; sur le Décret du 8 Mars 1790 * * * le 10 Mars 1790* (Paris, 1790). 23 pages. Demands that *personnes de couleur*, or at least that *toutes les personnes libres, sans exception*, be specifically enfranchised. Privately printed.

Réclamations des Nègres libres, Colons américains (s. n. l. d.). 3 pages. This *réclamation* appeared also in the *Moniteur* on November 29, 1789 (p. 22). Probably the work of Cocherel, who desired in this way to ridicule the mulattoes.

Règlement à l'Usage de l'Assemblée nationale (s. l. n. d.) 16 pages. Official.

/ *Réponse des Députés des Manufactures et du Commerce de France à MM. les Députés de S.-Domingue, concernant l'Approvisionnement de cette Colonie* (Versailles, s. d.) 20 pages.

Réponse des Députés des Manufactures et du Commerce de France, aux Motions de MM. de Cocherel & de Raynaud [sic], Députés de l'Isle de St.-Domingue à l'Assemblée nationale (Versailles, 1789). 55 pages.

Réponse succincte des Députés de S.-Domingue, au Mémoire des Commerçants des Ports de Mer, Distribué dans les Bureaux de l'Assemblée nationale, le 9 Octobre 1789 (Versailles, 1789). 12 pages.

Requête présentée aux Etats-généraux du Royaume, le 8 Juin 1789, par les Députés de la Colonie de Saint-Domingue (s. l. n. d.). 7 pages. Signed by Gouy d'Arisy and nine others.

× *Suite de la Correspondance de Monsieur le Gouverneur Général (s. l. n. d.)* 8 pages. Between Peynier and the provincial assembly at Cap Français.

Supplique des Citoyens de Couleur des Isles et Colonies françaises, tendante à obtenir un Jugement. 30 Janvier 1790 (s. l. n. d.). 4 pages. Privately printed.

*Supplique et Pétition des Citoyens de Couleur des Isles & Colonies françaises, sur la Motion faite le 27 Novembre 1789, par M. de Curt, Député de la Guadeloupe, au Nom des Colonies réunies * * * Du 2 Décembre 1789 (s. l. n. d.).* 21 pages. Not read to the National Assembly. Cites laws and ordinances which restrict the rights and privileges of the mulattoes.

III. NEWSPAPERS.

Courier de Provence. 17 volumes. Started by Mirabeau on May 4, 1789. The first two numbers are entitled *Etats-généraux*. Then follow nineteen *Lettres du Comte de Mirabeau à ses Commettans*. After which the title *Courier de Provence* is adopted. Valuable for debates, but biased in favor of the *Amis des Noirs*.

Le Courrier de Versailles à Paris et de Paris à Versailles. Started on July 5, 1789, and ended on October 17, 1789. By Gorsas, citoyen de Paris. More valuable as an expression of the opinions of a radical politician than for statements of fact.

Gazette nationale, ou le Moniteur universel. Paris, original edition, started on November 24, 1789, in folio. Commonly known as the *Moniteur*. Especially valuable for the debates after February 3, 1790. It also published important historical material in the form of news items.

Gazette de Paris. Started on October 1, 1789, and ended on August 10, 1792. 6 volumes. Principal editor was de Rozoi, perhaps a member of the Massiac Club. Favors the policy of the colonial planters; published now and then important bits of correspondence.

Journal des Débats et des Décrets. Versailles, and later Paris, chez Baudouin, Imprimeur de l'Assemblée nationale. Started on August 29, 1789. 862 numbers with separate pagination cover the period of the National Assembly. Valuable for debates.

Journal des Etats-généraux, * * * rédigé par M. Le Hodey de Saultchevreuil. Paris, started on June 1, 1789. 35 volumes. The title of this newspaper was frequently changed or modified. The above is only the cover title, used for the sake of convenience. Gives the fullest and most reliable account of the debates. No news items and very few personal comments.

Le Patriote français, Journal libre, impartial et national, par une Société des Citoyens, & dirigé par J. P. Brissot de Warville. First number bears the date of July 28, 1789, and last number the date of June 2, 1793. After June 30, 1790, all the words are dropped from the title except *Le Patriote français*. 8 volumes in quarto. Contains news, correspondence, etc. Official organ of the *Société des Amis des Noirs*.

Le Point de Jour ou Résultat de ce qui s'est passé la Veille à l'Assemblée nationale. By Barère de Vieuzac. Started on June 19, 1789, and ended on October 3, 1781. 815 numbers. Early

numbers especially good for the debates and references to the colonies.

Précis de la Séance de l'Assemblée nationale. The first number bears the title, *Séance du 5 Août 1789*. Other numbers appeared bearing the following dates: des 5 & 6 août 1789; du 7 juillet [août] 1789; du 20 août 1789; du 22 août 1789, & séance du 23; du dimanche 23 août, 7 heures du soir, et du lundi 24 août, 9 heures du matin; du lundi 24 août 1789, 7 heures du soir; du mercredi 26 août 1789; du jeudi 27 août 1789; vendredi 28 août 1789; vendredi 28 août, sept heures du soir. A Paris, chez Baudouin. When the *Journal des Débats et des Décrets* started on August 29, Baudouin discontinued the publication of the *Précis*.

IV. PAMPHLETS.

Printed correspondence, personal memoirs, and controversial literature.

Aux Ennemis de l'Imposture (Paris, 1791). 3 pages. By Gouy d'Arisy. Denies that his correspondence has caused troubles in Santo Domingo.

Confession d'un Député dans ses derniers Momens, ou Liste des Péchés politiques de Louis-Marthe-de Gouy (Paris, 1791). 18 pages. References to colonial affairs.

Confession générale faite au Public par l'Auteur du Mot à l'Oreille (s. l. n. d.). 24 pages. Sarcastic comments on the corrupt administration of Santo Domingo.

Considérations présentées aux vrais Amis du Repos et du Bonheur de la France, à l'Occasion des nouveaux Mouvemens de quelques soi-disant Amis-des-Noirs. Par M. L. E. Moreau de Saint-Méry, député de la Martinique à l'Assemblée nationale. Premier Mars mil sept cent quatre-vingt-onze (Paris, 1791). 74 pages. Attributes colonial ills to the *Amis des Noirs*. The first

twenty-eight pages are narrative ; the rest is argumentative. The author was well informed but prejudiced.

Correspondance de Julien Raimond, avec ses Frères, de Saint-Domingue, et les Pièces, qui lui Adressées par eux (Paris An Deuxième). 136 pages in quarto. Contains copies of letters written to Raymond and by Raymond, as well as other letters. In date the letters range from October 1, 1789, to March 29, 1793.

Correspondance de Thomas Lindet pendant la Constituante et la Législative (1789-1792. Publiée par Armand Moutier (Paris, 1899). Pp. xvi, 393. Comments on colonial questions.

Correspondance inédite du Constituant Thibaudeau (1789-1791). Publiée par Henri Carré et P. Boissonnade (Paris, 1898). Pp. xxxi, 214. A few references to colonies.

Correspondance secrète des Députés de Saint-Domingue avec les Comités de cette Isle (Paris, l'An de la Liberté 1er). 53 pages. Collected and printed by an opponent of the colonial deputies ; but seems authentic and trustworthy.

Dénonciation de M. de l'Abbé Grégoire, et de sa Lettre du 8 Juin 1791, adressée aux Citoyens de Couleur & Nègres libres de Saint-Domingue, & des autres Isles françaises de l'Amérique, &c., (Paris, 1791). 50 pages. Reprints Grégoire's letter and makes running comments on it.

Discours sur la Nécessité d'établir à Paris une Société pour concourir, avec celle de Londres, à l'Abolition de la Traite & de l'Esclavage des Nègres. Prononcé le 19 février 1788, dans une société de quelques amis, rassemblés à Paris, à la prière du comité de Londres (*s. l. n. d.*). 32 pages. Tells what the abolition societies were already doing in Pennsylvania and London, and outlines a policy to be followed in Paris.

Discours sur la Nécessité de maintenir le Décret rendu le 15 Mai 1791, en Faveur des Hommes de Couleur libres, prononcé le

12 septembre 1791, à la séance de la Société des Amis de la Constitution, séante aux Jacobins (s. l. n. d.). 28 pages. By Brissot de Warville.

Discours sur les Troubles de Saint-Domingue. (Reprinted in *Courier de Provence*, XI. Bound under separate pagination at end of volume). 44 pages. By Pétion. Not delivered in the Nat. Ass. Opposed to decree of October 12, 1790.

Diverses Pièces rédigées et publiées par M. de Gouy, pendant le Temps que les Députés des Colonies se sont abstenus des Séances de l'Assemblée nationale (s. l. n. d.). Contains three private letters.

Extrait d'une Lettre de Saint-Domingue. Du premier juin 1789 (s. l. n. d.). Drought in Santo Domingo.

Extrait d'une Lettre privée, écrite le 30 Mars 1790, par M. de Gouy, Représentant de Saint-Domingue à M. L'Archevêque Thibaut alors résident dans la Colonie, au Sujet du Décret de l'Assemblée nationale du 8 Mars. 1790, et de l'Instruction du 28 dudit Mois (s. l. n. d.). 4 pages. Advises opposition to the enforcement of the decrees. Denounced twice in the Nat. Ass., September 20, 1790, and April 5, 1791.

Faits et Idées sur Saint-Domingue, relativement à la Révolution actuelle (Paris, 1789). 40 pages in quarto. Written by a colonist opposed to the Massiac Club.

Faits relatifs aux Troubles de Saint-Domingue, présentés au Comité Colonial, en Vertu d'un Décret de l'Assemblée nationale, par M. Boré, citoyen et planteur de Saint-Domingue (Paris, 1792). Sketch of personal experience in Santo Domingo during the years 1789-1791.

Gaultier de Biauzat, Député du Tiers-Etat, aux États généraux de 1789. Sa Vie et sa Correspondance, par Francisque Mège (Paris, 1890). 2 vols. References in second volume to colonies.

Le Généalogiste américain, ou la Revanche du Panflet, ayant pour titre: Réclamations des Nègres libres, Colons américains (s. l. n. d.). 8 pages. Points out that white Creoles may have negro blood in their veins; the contrary can not be proved.

✧ *Histoire des Troubles de S.-Domingue, depuis le Mois d'Octobre 1789, jusqu'au 16 Juillet 1791*, par M. Gatereau, citoyen du Cap Français (Paris, 1792). 48 pages. Eye-witness of much of what he describes but a partisan of the mulattoes.

*An Historical Survey of the French Colony in the Island of St. Domingo: * * * in the Year 1791, * * * 1793, and 1794, (In The History, Civil and Commercial, of the British West Indies. Fifth edition, London, 1819. Vol. III. 1-240.)* By Bryan Edwards. Written from personal observation and documentary evidence. Edwards visited Santo Domingo in September, 1791.

Journal d'Adrien Duquesnoy, Député du Tiers-Etat de Bar-le-Duc, sur l'Assemblée constituante, 3 Mai 1789-3 Avril 1790. Publié * * * par Robert de Crèvecoeur (Paris, 1894). 2 vols. Duquesnoy was sometimes mistaken and prejudiced, but his comments are frequently illuminating. He wrote under the impression of the moment.

Journal inédit de Jallet, Curé de Chérigné, Député du Clergé du Poitou, aux Etats-généraux de 1789. Précédé d'une notice historique par J.-J. Brethé (Fontenay-le-Comte, 1871). 166 pages. A few references to the colonial deputies.

✧ *Lettre au Citoyen D***, Député à la Convention nationale, par Julien Raymond, Colon de Saint-Domingue, sur l'Etat des divers Partis de cette Colonie, et sur le Caractère des Déportés.* (Paris, 1793). 24 pages. Discusses decrees adopted by the Constituent Assembly. Raymond was a mulatto, educated and wealthy, resident in France since 1784. His original purpose was to arouse public sentiment in favor of the mulattoes and to persuade the

Minister of Marine to issue orders for the enforcement of the Black Code of 1685. In the years that followed his arrival, he published a number of pamphlets in which he traced the troubles in the colonies to the cruelty and the overbearing disposition of the whites. He was well informed, but prejudiced.

Lettre aux Citoyens de Couleur et Nègres libres de Saint-Domingue, et des autres Isles françaises de l'Amérique. Par M. Grégoire, député à l'Assemblée nationale (Paris, 1791). 15 pages. A sort of pastoral letter to the mulattoes of the colonies on the decree of May 15, 1791. Written June 8, 1791.

Lettre aux Philantropes, sur les Malheurs, les Droits et les Réclamations des Gens de Couleur de Saint-Domingue, et des autres Iles françaises de l'Amérique; par M. Grégoire, Curé d'Emberménil, (Paris, 1790). 21 pages. Concerning the status of mulattoes in the colonies. But the information was not first hand. This *Lettre* was also published in *Courier de Provence*, XI. 115-135, October 20-23, 1790.

Letter beginning: *A Paris le 14 février 1791.* Written to the cities of commerce by the six delegates from Cap Français and the five delegates from the parishes of Port-au-Prince and Croix-des-Bouquets. 6 pages in folio. Urges the cities to remonstrate with the Nat. Ass. against the enfranchisement of the mulattoes.

Letter beginning: *Français, la nation est en péril (s. l. n. d.).* 4 pages in quarto. Written by Payen de Boisneuf.

*Lettre de J. P. Brissot à M. Barnave, sur ses Rapports concernant les Colonies, les Décrets qui les ont suivis, leurs Conséquences fatales; * * ** (Paris, 1790). 104 pages. Expository and argumentative. Long and tiresome. Brissot was the most conspicuous member of the *Société des Amis des Noirs*.

Lettre de M. de Gouy à M. Desmeuniers, Député à l'Assemblée nationale (Paris, 1791)..

Lettre de M. de Thebaudières, Député de Saint-Domingue, à M. le Marquis d'Aussigné, Membre de l'Assemblée provinciale du Cap (s. l. n. d.). 8 pages. Written from Paris on January 28, 1790. Replies to criticisms made at Cap Français of several colonial deputies at Paris.

✓ *Lettre d'un Citoyen, détenu pendant quatorze Mois et traduit au Tribunal révolutionnaire, au Citoyen C. B. * * *, Représentant du Peuple, en Réponse sur une Question importante* (Paris, An III). 12 pages. Written by Julien Raymond. A violent denunciation of the white planters as the instigators of the troubles in the colonies.

Louis-Marthe-de Gouy, Député à l'Assemblée nationale, à ses Commettans (Paris, 1791). 46 pages. Gives valuable information concerning the debates of May 11-15, 1791.

Mémoire de M. de Blanchelande, sur son Administration à Saint-Domingue (s. l. n. d.). 24 pages in quarto. Account of administration from November 8, 1790, to June 30, 1791.

Mémoire en Faveur des Gens de Couleur ou Sang-mêlés de St.-Domingue, et des autres Isles françaises de l'Amérique, adressé à l'Assemblée nationale. Par M. Grégoire, Curé d'Emberménil (Paris, 1789). 52 pages. The mulattoes are represented as quiet, law-abiding citizens who suffer grievous wrongs at the hands of the whites. As he refers to his speech of December 3 (p. 42), we infer that this pamphlet was written in December, 1789.

*Mémoire et Observations du Sieur Barbé-Marbois, Intendant des Isles-sous-le-Vent en 1786-1789 * * ** (Paris, 1790.) 58 pages in quarto. Defends his administration.

Mémoire sur la Nécessité d'unir de la Manière la plus avantageuse les Intérêts des Colonies & du Commerce & celui des Colons & des Commerçants; par M. Joubert du Collet, Juge en Chef du Consolat de Nantes (Nantes, 1790). 12 pages in quarto.

States clearly the points at issue in the controversy between the colonists and the merchants.

Observations de M. Cocherel, Député de Saint-Domingue, à l'Assemblée nationale, sur la Demande des Mulâtres (Paris, s. d.). 12 pages. Published probably in January, 1790. Opposed to the admission of colored deputies.

Observations de M. le Cte. de Reynaud, Député de Saint-Domingue, sur quelques Articles du Projet d'Instruction présenté par le Comité colonial des Douze, pour être adressé aux Colonies avec le Décret du 8 Mars (Paris, 1790). 12 pages in quarto. A sort of minority report made in the Nat. Ass. by Reynaud.

*Observations sur l'Origine et les Progrès du Préjugé des Colons blancs contre les Hommes de Couleur; * * ** Par M. Raymond, homme de couleur de Saint-Domingue (Paris, 1791). Pp. viii, 46. Claims that race prejudice arose after 1763.

Observations sur la Situation politique de Saint-Domingue. Par M. de Pons, habitant * * * (Paris, 1790). Pp. xvi, 101. De Pons was a member of the assembly of Saint Marc. This pamphlet is a treatise on the administration of Santo Domingo.

Oeuvres de Barnave mises en Ordre et précédées d'une Notice historique sur Barnave, par M. Béranger de la Drome (Paris, 1843). 4 vols.

Opinion de M. Blin, Député de Nantes, sur la Proposition faite par un de MM. les Députés des Colonies réunis, d'établir un Comité colonial, &c., (Paris, 1789). 11 pages. Delivered in the Nat. Ass. and printed by its order.

Opinion de M. de Cocherel, Député de S.-Domingue, sur l'Admission des Nègres & Mulâtres libres aux Assemblées provinciales. Printed in the *Moniteur* (1 décembre 1789), 30.

Opinion de M. le Marquis de Gouy d'Arsy, Député de Saint-Domingue, sur le Rétablissement du Conseil-supérieur du Cap,

& sur le Renvoi de M. le Comte de la Luzerne, Ministre actuel de la Marine; prononcée à l'Assemblée nationale, au Nom de la Députation de la Colonie (s. l., 1790). 22 pages. References to colonial conditions.

Précis des Gémissemens des Sang-mêlés dans les Colonies françaises. Par J. M. C., Américain, sang-mêlé (Paris, 1789). 16 pages. Tells of the humiliations suffered by mulattoes.

Précis historique de la Révolution de Saint Domingue. Par L. J. Clausson, propriétaire, et ancien magistrat au Port-au-Prince (Paris, 1819). Pp. xii, 155. Tells the story from point of view of a white proprietor.

Que ceux qui ont une âme lisent ceci (Au Cap, Isle Saint-Domingue, février 1789.) 12 pages. Seems to have been originally a letter addressed to a colonist in France. Tells of the election of deputies to the Estates General.

Réflexions de M. de Cocherel, Député de Saint-Domingue, sur le Rapport du Comité des Six (Paris, s. d.). 16 pages. Claims that the committee of six appointed to investigate famine conditions in Santo Domingo was prejudiced and unfair to the colonists.

Réflexions sommaires adressée à la France et à la Colonie de Saint-Domingue (Paris, s. d.). 43 pages. By Laborie, habitant & secrétaire de la Chambre d'Agriculture du Cap Français. References to general conditions in Santo Domingo.

Réflexions sur l'Admission, aux Etats-généraux, des Députés de Saint-Domingue, par J. P. Brissot de Warville, membre de la Société des Amis des Noirs de Paris, & membre honoraire des sociétés institutées pour l'abolition de la traite & de l'esclavage des noirs à Philadelphie, à Newyork, & à Londres (s. l. n. d.). 36 pages. A fair and convincing argument.

Relation authentique de tout ce qui s'est passé à Saint-Domingue avant et après le Départ forcé de l'Assemblée coloniale,

* * * (*s. l. n. d.*). Bears date of August 9, 1790. Gives a partial account of disturbances at Port-au-Prince and Saint Marc during July and August, 1790. Favors assembly of Saint Marc.

Réponse aux Considérations de M. Moreau, dit Saint-Mér Député à l'Assemblée nationale, sur les Colonies; par M. Raymon Citoyen de Couleur de Saint-Domingue (Paris, 1791). Pp. ii. 6. Controversial. Troubles attributed to whites.

Sur les Troubles des Colonies, et l'unique Moyen d'assurer Tranquillité, la Prospérité, et la Fidélité de ces Dépendances de l'Empire; * * * Par M. Dumorier (Paris, 1791). 60 pages. Contains two speeches of Dumorier in opposition to the policy of the *Amis des Noirs*.

Un Mot à l'Oreille (*s. l. n. d.*). 2 pages. Intimates that colonies might secede. Written perhaps by Gouy d'Arsy.

Véritable Origine des Troubles de S.-Domingue, et des différentes Causes qui les ont produits; par Julien Raimond, Député des Citoyens de Couleur (Paris, An IV). 55 pages. Tells the story of the troubles during the years 1789-1791. Stoutly defends the mulattoes from complicity in the slave insurrection of 1791. The author holds a brief for the mulattoes.

V. SECONDARY WORKS

Boissonnade, P., *Saint-Domingue à la Veille de la Révolution et la Question de la Représentation coloniale aux Etats-généraux (Janvier 1788-7 Juillet 1789)*. Paris, 1906. 299 pages.

Bradby, E. D., *The Life of Barnave* (Oxford, 1915). Two volumes. Excellent chapters on the colonies.

Brette, A., *Les Gens de Couleur libres et leurs Députés en 1789*. In *La Révolution française*, XXIX. 326-345, 385-407. (1895).

Bruley, *Saint-Domingue et la Révolution française*. In *Revue de la Révolution*, XIV. 66 et seq. (1889). Has little value.

Cahen, Léon, *La Société des Amis des Noirs et Condorcet*. In *La Révolution française*, L. 481-511. (1906). Publishes by-laws of the *Société des Amis des Noirs* and some writings of Condorcet on slavery.

X Castonnet des Fosses, H., *La Perte d'une Colonie. La Révolution de Saint-Domingue* (Paris, 1893). Pp. vi, 377.

Deschamps, Léon, *Les Colonies pendant la Révolution. La Constituante et la Réforme coloniale* (Paris, 1898). Pp. xxvi, 340. Full of typographical errors, inaccurate statistics, and misstatements of fact.

Lebeau, Auguste, *De la Condition des Gens de Couleur libres sous l'Ancien Régime* (Poitiers, 1903). Pp. v. 133. Treats the subject from a legal point of view. Does not go beyond 1789.

X Mills, H. E., *The Early Years of the French Revolution in San Domingo* (Poughkeepsie, New York, no date).

Normand, Jean, *Le Pacte Colonial* (Paris, 1900). 174 pages. An exposition of the colonial system of the leading colonizing countries of Europe without reference to a specific period.

Pardon, *La Martinique depuis sa Découverte jusqu'à nos Jours* (Paris, 1877). 367 pages.

X Stoddard, T. Lothrop, *The French Revolution in San Domingo* (Boston and New York, 1914). Pp. xviii, 410.

X Vaissière, Pierre de, *Saint-Domingue. La Société et la Vie créoles sous l'Ancien Régime* (1629-1789). Paris, 1909.

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